

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

COUNTRY TOWN: THE HISTORY OF MINNEDOSA, MANITOBA
1879 - 1922 .

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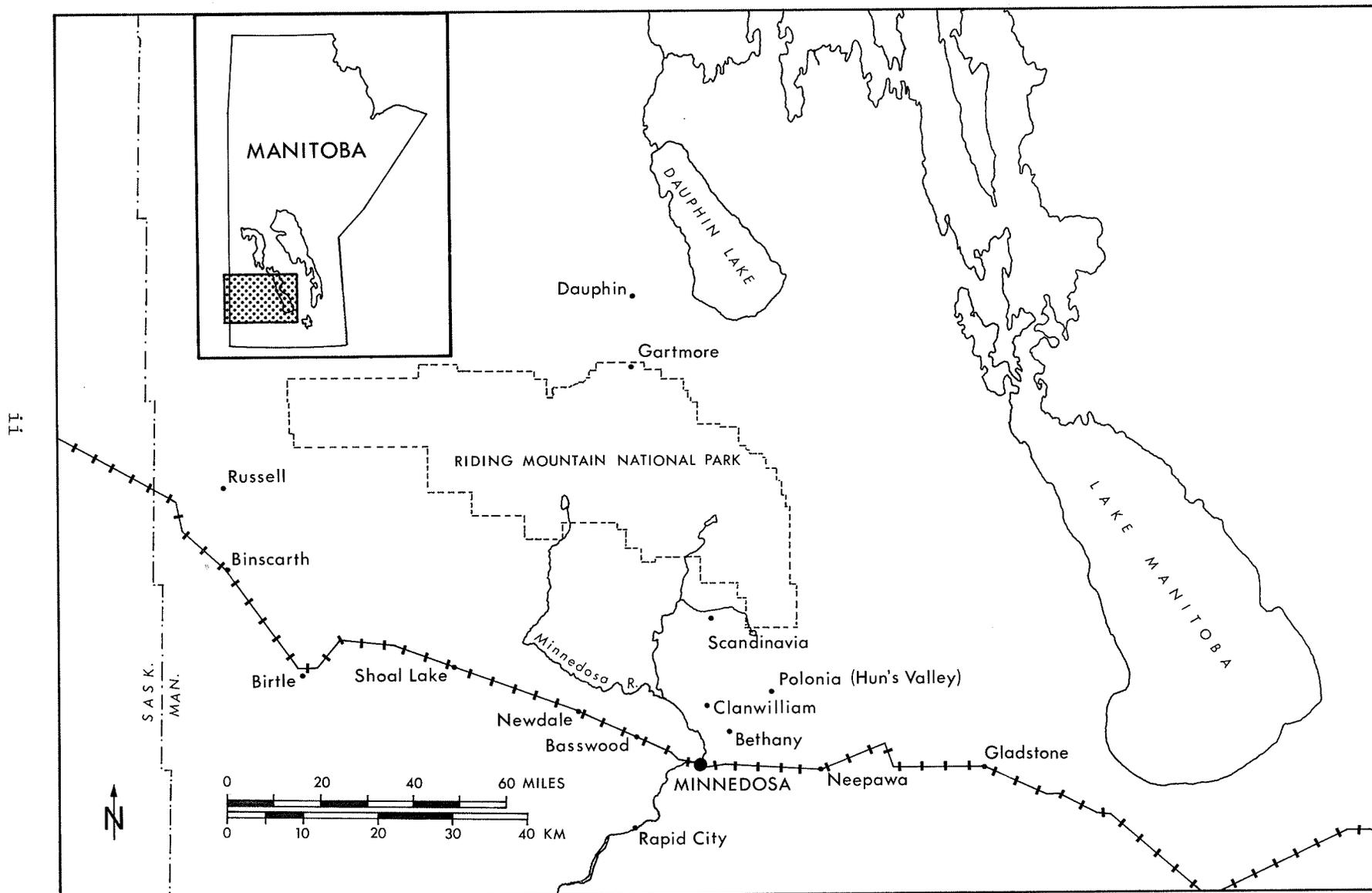
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LOCATION MAP

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PREFACE

This thesis is about the development of a country town during its formative years. The setting is Minnedosa, Manitoba, in the period from 1879 to 1922. It is an exploration in local history which seeks to understand the interplay between the specific and the general, local society and the larger society.

The theoretical underpinnings of the thesis derive mainly from the Leicester School of local history, whose principal tenet is that the study of a particular community or society over a finite period possesses an intrinsic worth. Each community has rhythms and patterns of development, as well as a chronology, which set it apart from all other communities. The limited geographical scope of such a study is not, however, to be confused with parochialism. If the study is structured around universal themes, themes common to all similar communities, then its findings will have implications beyond the boundaries of the community examined. The country town, as a central feature of the prairie landscape and as an important focus of nineteenth-century life, is a type of community especially worthy of study by the local historian.

This thesis is written around four broad themes. The first is that of site, best articulated by W.L. Morton. For some two hundred years prior to European settlement, the comparative hunting and trapping advantages of the Minnedosa area lured and held both native groups and mixed bloods. With the influx of homesteaders into the area after 1878 the future Minnedosa townsite became an important river crossing, and this prompted small-scale commercial development there. By 1883 local entrepreneurial activity had secured a railway connection for the incipient

community, which established Minnedosa as a commercial metropole for much of northwestern Manitoba.

The second theme concerns Minnedosa's economic base. Throughout the study period Minnedosa was an agricultural service center. It provided goods and services to a prosperous hinterland some thirty miles in diameter. The townscape reflected the strength of this economic base. In the course of forty years Minnedosa changed from a frontier town of log houses, false-fronted commercial buildings, and no public utilities to a thoroughly modern urban center. This physical transformation is also used as an indicator of changing attitudes among the citizenry and of the standard of living.

Local society is the third theme. From the beginning Minnedosa was a remarkably homogeneous Anglo-Saxon/Celtic, Protestant town. This was particularly evident in local institutions, attitudes, and recreation. Stratification was based on status, rather than on class. During the first three decades of development, decision-making power resided with an elite of male professionals and businessmen. Only after 1910 did a measure of decentralization occur as women assumed greater civic and social responsibilities.

The final theme is that of town-country relations. For a majority of farmers the relationship was primarily economic. Only those who lived closest to town participated regularly in its social life. Before 1900 relations between Minnedosans and almost all farmers were cordial. In the ensuing two decades differential rates of economic growth between town and country and the spread of agrarian reformism led to an ideological polarization of townspeople and farmers. Despite this, the economic

relationship remained unchanged.

This thesis, then, shows the applicability of the Leicester model to the Western Canadian context, and suggests that the model may be used to advantage in the study of other country towns.

Without the kind assistance of many people, this thesis could not have been written. I would like to thank the staffs of the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, the Provincial Library of Manitoba, and the Government Documents section of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba, for their enthusiastic responses to my innumerable requests for information. Mr. James McEwan, Prairie Zone Manager of Dun and Bradstreet, gave generously of his time and expertise as well.

I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. J.K. Wishart and his staff of the Minnedosa Town Office who graciously granted me time and working space to sift through much useful information on the early history of Minnedosa which is housed at their office. Their willing assistance and continuous good humor (despite my unreasonable demands on their photo-copying machine) made each of my trips to Minnedosa a pleasure.

I am much indebted to Professor J.E. Rea, in whose seminar on Western Canada parts of this thesis were first presented. For years my work has benefitted from his frank yet kindly criticism. My debt to Professor G.A. Friesen, who acted as my thesis advisor, is still greater. The importance of his constant advice, encouragement, and friendship has been, as always, immeasurable.

To my wife, whose association with these pages was second only to my own, I owe much more than mere words can ever suggest. Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, who always taught me that education is a precious gift.

CHAPTER 1

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

(i)

The Little Saskatchewan River originates among the spruce and poplar clad slopes of Riding Mountain, a great blue ridge which marks the western shoreline of old Lake Agassiz and the easternmost edge of the second prairie steppe. It flows to the southeast, gathering strength as numerous streams feed into it, until one hundred miles from its source it issues from the wooded slopes into an open, undulating country.¹ The channel which it cut into the glacial till plain is deep, its walls clothed in oak, aspen, and poplar, with a thick underbrush of hazel, chokecherry, dogwood, and saskatoon. On the valley bottom, flanking the river on both sides, grow clumps of willow and reedy bulrushes. The wide flats are carpeted in coarse prairie grass and flowers, wild hops and strawberries.

Prior to settlement, jackfish, bass, and pickerel choked the river and its tributaries, and the grassy flats and treed uplands provided food and shelter to buffalo, deer, elk, bear, fox, and other animals both large and small.² Grazing was rarely difficult, for the soils are rich and rainfall abundant. In the valley, where the river has cut through the till to the shale below, plant growth is less luxuriant, but the northern highlands relieve the situation by ensuring ample moisture as they work upon the prevailing westerlies. As

the winds come in, they rise over the hills and cool, and thus when they descend the eastern flank of the elevation they draw off little of the valley's water.³

Singularly unobtrusive, the land and its resources form the backdrop against which the history of Minnedosa has been played out. Abundant natural resources have always made habitation of the Little Saskatchewan Valley and its skirting plain not only possible but desirable.

(ii)

Beginning late in the seventeenth century, successive Indian tribes frequented the Little Saskatchewan Valley. The first to do so were the Assiniboine.⁴ Originally an eastern woodland tribe, their westward migration was prompted by the deterioration of relations with their Siouan relatives and by the irresistible pull of the fur trade. Migration proceeded steadily, and by the end of the seventeenth century Assiniboine could be found from Lake of the Woods to the Touchwood Hills. The Cree, friendly neighbors of the Assiniboine, occupied adjoining territory between James Bay and Lake Nipigon. Still farther east and south lived the Saulteaux (from Sault Ste. Marie). As one century passed into the next, tribe displaced tribe, until by the end of the nineteenth century the Assiniboine had disappeared from the valley.

The fur trade structured native life in the valley. The fur trade experience of the Assiniboine, Cree, and Saulteaux had begun in the seventeenth century when they were drawn into the French trading

network through native middlemen from more eastern tribes. After the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company they became middlemen themselves, forming a vital link between the Company's main post at York Factory and the more remote tribes of the western interior. With the reorganization of the French trade in 1763, an intense competition began for the furs of the interior. Numerous inland posts were established by both sides to facilitate trade, several of these in the area of the Little Saskatchewan.⁵ When the Hudson's Bay Company emerged the victor in 1821, trading patterns among western tribes became more fixed as the Company eliminated some posts and changed the functions of others. And, as the fur traders moved farther and farther inland because of depleting resources, trade turned more and more on the provision of food supplies to the remote posts. The natives of the Little Saskatchewan were active in trapping and provisioning, and one post in particular became very important to them. This was Fort Ellice, built at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Rivers.

Fort Ellice, some seventy miles west of the valley, was constructed in 1831 as a defence against American fur traders who had made inroads into the Company's trade with the Assiniboine and Cree through half-breed middlemen.⁶ Buying not only furs but buffalo robes and tongues as well, the Americans captured much of the plains market. Governor Simpson clearly identified the problem in 1831 when he wrote that

These Indians rove about in all directions over the extended plains between the Assiniboine and the Missouri; they give little or no attention to Fur hunting, but employ themselves

chiefly in the Buffalo Chase, and are more regular in their visits to American Establishments on the Missouri than to us; this arises from Buffalo being more numerous in that quarter than in the vicinity of our Posts, and from their finding a market for their Skins or robes on the spot instead of being at the trouble of dragging them overland a distance of several hundred miles.⁷

Partly as a response to American depredations and partly because of the diminishing supply of fur-bearing animals, Fort Ellice became a collection point for robes as well as furs. It functioned as such until the 1860s and then became mainly a provisions post. Over the intervening years its traders established a permanent clientele which included first the Assiniboine and then the Cree and Saulteaux of the Little Saskatchewan area. A sizeable population of mixed bloods, both Metis and half-breed, was also active in the provisioning trade and lived part of the year near Fort Ellice.

The transition from a nomadic to a settled economy⁸ in the western interior brought radical change to both natives and mixed bloods. The inevitable decline of the buffalo herds, the ubiquitous liquor traffic, devastating diseases such as smallpox, and the coming of permanent white settlement spelled the end of the native way of life. Missions had long been established at Fort Ellice in an attempt to settle and Christianize natives and mixed bloods alike, and to make the transition to civilization easier, but even the missionaries admitted that their efforts were failures.⁹

The Dominion government made way for extensive white settlement of the western interior through the creation of the North West Mounted Police and the reserve system. In 1871 and 1874 the natives of the

Fort Ellice-Little Saskatchewan area were persuaded to sign treaties with the Crown, surrendering all their lands and pledging obedience to the laws of the Dominion. By this time the Assiniboine had moved westward. The remaining Cree and Saulteaux, numbering about three hundred persons, were settled on two reserves, the Rolling River Reserve and the Okanese Reserve.¹⁰ They were provided with some farm stock and equipment in the hope that they might become sedentary farmers, but even as late as 1886 they still subsisted "for the most part on the fruits of the chase."¹¹ To the southwest, at the confluence of the Assiniboine River and Bird Tail Creek, was a Sioux reserve consisting of one thousand people. These natives were part of the great Sioux migration to the North West which took place after the Minnesota massacres of 1862. In contrast to the Cree and Saulteaux, many of the Sioux were quite good farmers.¹²

Of the mixed bloods little is known. Some undoubtedly moved westward in the face of increasing white settlement. Others may have chosen to remain in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, and prospered. And still others settled and became farmers.

(iii)

Four mixed blood families decided to occupy land in the Little Saskatchewan Valley within a few miles of what would later become the Minnedosa townsite.¹³ They wanted to homestead, but since the land had not yet been surveyed, they remained squatters. The head of one family was a man named John Tanner, son of an American missionary and grandson of the famous "Black Falcon" of Kentucky.¹⁴ Born in 1838, Tanner

fought with the North in the American Civil War, lost an arm, and finally came to the Little Saskatchewan Valley in 1870, after hunting and trapping across the West.¹⁵ To him the valley held more than just agricultural prospects. Perhaps because his physical disability made farming difficult, John Tanner would exploit the commercial potential of his farmsite.

Tanner's farm was near the well-trodden Saskatchewan Trail, which stretched from Fort Garry in the east to Fort Edmonton in the distant west.¹⁶ All who used the trail travelled due west from Fort Garry through Portage la Prairie to a point some miles west where the trail forked. One branch, known as the South Trail, dipped to the south through the Carberry Plains area and then turned northward to join the second branch near the Little Saskatchewan River a few miles west of Tanner's farm. The other branch, or North Trail, continued in a northwesterly direction, crossed the Whitemud River three times, and entered the valley of the Little Saskatchewan through a narrow eastern pass. There it was necessary for all travellers to descend one hundred and seventy-five feet to the valley floor and cross the river. Descending the steep valley walls could be treacherous, but finding a good ford was even more difficult, for here the water ran very swiftly. Continuous use of the trail had revealed three fords. One of these, where the water was usually three or four feet deep and the current less dangerous, was on Tanner's farm, and it formed a natural bottleneck on the trail westward. Here John Tanner operated a toll ferry, and later, a toll bridge.¹⁷ James Trow, a touring Member of Parliament,

described his visit to Tanner's Crossing in 1878:

We proceeded down grade for nearly two miles, and arrived at Tanner's Bridge, which we crossed after paying a fee of 25 cts. each for the horses and a similar fee for the carriages . . . The bridge is a rickety, corduroy, rough structure. The river is about 100 feet wide at the bridge and from 6 to 10 feet deep. The flats on the west side had been flooded, and were in a dangerous state.¹⁸

This modest commercial enterprise was the first in the Little Saskatchewan Valley to be operated by a single entrepreneur, and it marked Tanner as a shrewd man. In succeeding years his choice of site would make him a rich man.

By the 1870s the wagons and carts of settlers had replaced the fur brigades. Few settlers had yet stepped into the isolation that lay beyond the Third Crossing of the Whitemud, but as Dominion Lands Surveyors reached the valley in 1873 several homesteaders followed. They were bachelors, with names like Cameron, McTavish, Grant, and Thompson,¹⁹ and their arrival meant that the valley was thenceforth to be a permanent agricultural settlement. The presence of these settlers, the quantity of good homestead lands, and the attractiveness of the site soon induced others to make the same trek. The Crossing was not as remote as it seemed, for in 1875 two North West Mounted Policemen were stationed there to carry the mail between Dufferin on the Red and Fort Livingstone on the Swan River.²⁰ As agents of the civilization which the settlers had just left, the policemen probably gave settlers a sense of security. It was, after all, only a few years since the Riel insurrection. As recently as 1873 some Metis had attacked the settlement at White Horse Plains.²¹ To the southwest roamed many of the Sioux

who had participated in the Minnesota massacres. Moreover, the valley itself was filled with teepees and burial grounds.²² Fears of another native uprising may well have played upon the minds of these early settlers.

Settlement of the area was considerable by 1877, and in February of that year the Dominion government opened a post office at the Crossing under the name of Little Saskatchewan, N.W.T.²³ Mail was received once every three weeks and John Tanner, not unexpectedly, was the first postmaster. It was in the next year, however, that the rush to the valley really began. Between April of 1878 and February of 1879, more than a thousand settlers moved into the area.²⁴ They came from as far away as Sweden and Holland, from the British Isles and from the United States. Others were not so strange to the area, having farmed in neighboring Manitoba, the boundary of which was only some sixty miles to the east. But by far the largest number came from Ontario, from the counties Bruce, Huron, Wellington, Dundas, Grenville, and from many others.

The trip from Ontario was no simple matter at this time. Economic problems had in 1877 stopped the trains of the St. Paul and Pacific Railway, which formed the crucial middle link in the land, rail, and water route through the United States, a route which would shortly carry thousands of immigrants to the North West. Few Ontarians were prepared, as was valley homesteader W. G. Sanderson, to make the long journey entirely by horse and wagon.²⁵ Most chose the rugged but shorter overland route through the Precambrian Shield.

The journey usually began by steamer from a lake port such as Kincardine or Owen Sound, and, after four or five rough days on the lakes, the boat put in at Port Arthur or Fort William.²⁶ The family's belongings had then to be transferred to a wagon, no small task since most families were not poor and had trunk after trunk of clothing, several pieces of furniture, tools, bedding, and other necessities. From the lakehead settlers travelled the Dawson Road for some fifty miles, and then transferred their goods to a smaller steamer which carried them across Lake Shebandowan. Once across, everything was moved overland to the Rainy River, transferred to York boats and towed up river by a small tug-boat to the Lake of the Woods. This part of the journey took another five days. The hundred or so miles from the North-West Angle to the small city of Winnipeg were covered by hired horses and wagon, with horses changed as often as three times daily. In all, the trip from Ontario took well over two weeks, and often longer.

Winnipeg served as a resting place for the weary Ontarians. But at times it was difficult to find a place to rest. An anonymous writer, known only as Mrs. E.L.A., recalled her family's stay at Winnipeg's Rossin House in the spring of 1880. There was such a demand for accommodation that the family had to spend the night with three strangers in a cramped room. This they found "a disconcerting experience" but "on hearing the next day of others who had been obliged to sleep on the parlour floor, we considered ourselves fortunate."²⁷ They reluctantly ventured out into the gumbo of a Red River spring, and inquired about the best way to pursue their journey to the Little

Saskatchewan Valley. Most settlers, finding themselves in the same situation, bought a Red River cart, an ox and the requisite harness, all for less than one hundred dollars. Next they would purchase some provisions, a cow and perhaps some machinery, and the journey would begin via the Saskatchewan Trail. Wherever possible, they would spend their nights at stopping-houses along the trail where sleeping space and a hot meal could usually be had for fifty cents a person. This family, however, evidently had considerable means, for they travelled with their belongings aboard the steamer Minnesota to Portage la Prairie, where they disembarked while their goods continued on to the landing at Grand Valley. At the Portage they bought oxen, a wagon, and some supplies, and took to the trail. After reaching the valley and filing a claim at the Dominion Land Titles Office, just downstream from Tanner's Crossing, the husband journeyed by wagon to Grand Valley, about thirty miles distant, and freighted their belongings home.

Once land had been obtained for a homestead, shelter became the immediate concern of all settlers. The first homes in the valley were invariably crude,

hewn wholly out of the forest - walls, floors, partitions, in short everything except doors and windows have been cut out of the forest and hewn into shape with the axe and adze.²⁸

Among those who arrived early in the spring, the axe was used to dovetail the logs at each corner; those who came later used the quicker notch-and-saddle method. The cracks between the rough poplar logs were not chinked with mud, as was usually the case in pioneer homes, but with a limestone and sand mortar, obtained from a lime kiln which had been built

in a nearby hillside.²⁹ From this kiln also came the whitewash which covered the walls, inside and out.³⁰ Since shingles were not yet available, sod, or more commonly coarse thatch, was placed over closely-fitted small logs. Floors were usually packed mud or small logs flattened on one side. The usual house plan was rectangular with a gabled roof, but a few square lean-to's were built as well. E.A.W. Gill, for many years a minister at Minnedosa, has left a description of the more common style:

It is built of poplar logs, and is only twenty-four feet long and eighteen wide, and downstairs is all in one big room. Upstairs it is divided by board partitions into three rooms - one 'big' one and two little ones. The ceiling downstairs is very low . . . and in the bedrooms the only place you can stand up without bumping your head on the roof is in the middle.³¹

This particular home was probably the second to be built by the family, but Gill's description does, nonetheless, convey the cramped feeling which these Ontarian families must have experienced in their new homes.

Regardless of style, most homes were simply furnished. Improvisation accounted for many furnishings, since there was a limit to the number of belongings a settler could bring from Ontario. Few were as fortunate (or as persevering) as Mrs. W.B. St. John, who brought along her grand piano! A few plain chairs, a large wooden table, a stove, a washstand, some beds, and a wooden chest or two were essentials, although a few homes were graced with such luxuries as a small, hand-operated sewing machine, and later on, with an organ.

To the new settler, shelter did not mean just a house. In those instances where a settler had driven cattle along on the trip from Winnipeg, a barn was equally important. If the number of livestock was

small, a crude log structure sufficed. However, after a settler had acquired many head, perhaps even ones of good breeding, a more substantial structure was required. Thus it was that a new barn was sometimes built before a more comfortable house. Such a task could not, however, be accomplished by a single family, especially when there were so many other chores which constantly demanded attention. It called for co-operative effort among neighbors, for the proverbial barn-raising.

Little Saskatchewan farmers were especially favored for, unlike the residents of so many pioneer communities, they suffered no shortage of good building materials. Each winter the slopes of Riding Mountain were the site of logging camps peopled by local farmers.³² They either floated the logs down the Little Saskatchewan in the spring or had them cut into timbers or lumber by one of the small mills on the Mountain and hauled them home by sleigh. An experienced carpenter - and there was always one around - measured and cut the timbers for the barn's framework. This completed, all the building materials were arranged into two sets, one for each side of the building.³³ On the day of the raising, neighbors from miles around gathered at the farm, divided into two groups, and raced to see which group could raise its side first. In such a manner were some huge barns erected, like the R.P. Fraser barn just a few miles north-west of Minnedosa, which measured one hundred and fifty-eight by forty-one feet. Barn-raising were also social occasions. While the men raced to put up the barn, the women raced to keep up with the men's appetites and the event took on a community picnic atmosphere. After the work was finished, a dance often completed the day.

The barn was the biggest of the outbuildings, but not the only one of importance to the farmer and his family. Milk and ice-houses were just as common and just as necessary. The former were usually of log construction, and sometimes set into the ground a step or two.³⁴ Inside were long shelves which held shallow pans of milk from the day's milking, set out to allow the thick cream to rise. The cream, after being skimmed off, was placed in metal containers called cream cans, and placed in a tub of ice on the earthen floor. Ice was obtained from the ice-house, which was usually set much deeper into the ground or built like a well-shaft.³⁵ In the winter ice blocks were cut from the river or from sloughs, packed in clean sawdust, and lowered into the ice-house where the cool, damp earth preserved them through many hot summer months. Another outbuilding on many farms was the summer kitchen.³⁶ This was either a detached building close to the farmhouse, or a closed-off addition on the back or side of the house. During the winter months it refrigerated meats and other perishables and served as a storage shed for wood used in the cookstove. In the hot summer months it was used as a kitchen. The cookstove was moved into it and all cooking was done there, with the pleasant result of cooling the main house.

While buildings of many sorts were necessary to every homestead, the land was the heart of the farm operation. So important was it, in fact, that construction of secondary outbuildings halted as soon as the frost was out of the ground. Settlers turned their attention to the preparation of a seedbed.³⁷ The initial task was breaking, most

commonly done with a moldboard plough pulled by a team of oxen or horses. This generally began sometime in April, depending on the weather, and lasted until the heat of July baked the sod too hard to plough. Since no more than three acres could be ploughed in one day, and inclement weather often intervened, the first fields were small. In midsummer valley farmers began haying operations in the slough bottoms and on the river flats, a time-consuming operation since many hours of scything and stacking were required to put up several tons of hay. With the price of local hay at six to twelve dollars per ton, few settlers would have chosen to purchase it from established farmers.³⁸ Periods of bad weather allowed the completion of outbuildings. In the autumn, the broken acreage was backset. The winter months were spent tending livestock, cutting, hauling, and stacking wood for the cook-stove, mending harness, and cutting logs on Riding Mountain.

In the spring of the second year valley farmers harrowed their fields and sowed the first large crops by hand broadcasting.³⁹ The land was fertile and yielded bountiful crops of wheat and oats. In 1878 the wheat yield was about thirty bushels to the acre and the oat yield fifty to sixty bushels.⁴⁰ When ripe, the crop was cut with scythe and cradle, bundled and stooked. Then, as soon as possible after drying, it was either stacked as feed, or flailed to shake loose the kernels. Later, when farmers acquired more capital and land, machinery such as broadcast seeders and steam-operated threshers came into use. Community threshing operations usually ensured that harvesting was completed before the first snowfall.

While the members of each family did not always work together, even their separate efforts contributed to the family economy. Men, being physically stronger, usually handled the heavy work, but the work of their wives was no less time-consuming nor arduous. Since valley stores were few before 1880, and ready-made goods dear, women were obliged to make most of the items required for everyday living. Clothes were of course high on the list of home-made goods, but such things as candles and soap were also of domestic manufacture.⁴¹ Soap-making clearly illustrates the improvisation necessary on the settlement frontier. It was made by draining lye from a barrel of wood ashes through which rain water had been run. The lye was mixed with beef grease and allowed to set. Tallow candles were made with metal molds, and when the supply of candles was exhausted, a rag in a saucer of grease served the same purpose, although at some risk. Not until the valley had well-stocked stores in the early 1880s did coal-oil lamps and lanterns come into general usage. Women did these domestic chores along with milking, picking eggs, tending gardens, canning, churning butter, and the like, all of which added up to daily hours at least as long, and probably exceeding, those put in by the men. Children, too, had their chores, like hauling water from the well and ensuring a steady supply of wood for the cookstove. As they grew older, the chores increased in number and difficulty. Prolonged adolescence had no supporters on the farm.

But not all was work on the valley farms; life had its lighter side too. Barn-raising might involve the entire farm community and so

could a quilting bee. Since sewing machines were rare, most women became accomplished needleworkers. And, because the demands of farm-life left little time for visiting, it was not unusual for women to gather and sew together. "The women were lonely", one valley settler recalled,

so they gathered as soon after the noon meal as possible, some even coming in the morning to help 'set up' the quilt. While their fingers wove the needles in and out, their tongues caught up with the latest district news or discussed the new babies, etc. The quilts were mostly made from left-overs, scraps from dresses or aprons or of heavy patches taken from worn-out trousers, suits, or even underwear, and the patterns ranged from 'Wedding Ring' and 'Morning Star' to 'Crazy Work' where every scrap could be used. The inter-lining was often of sheep's wool grown on the farm and prepared ahead of time. All returned home in time for evening chores refreshed in spirit and feeling nearer to their neighbors than before.⁴²

Women needed such escapes from the monotony and isolation of farm life. Men, by contrast, met more regularly while ploughing adjacent fields, borrowing machinery, or hauling grain to the local grist mill. Since women had few comparable encounters, an occasional 'bee' helped bridge the gap.

There were other activities in which the sexes were not as segregated. These included dances and card parties, sometimes combined. They were held at a neighbor's home in the evening, and as many as seventy-five people might crowd into a small house to party together. It was not necessary to have "an orchestra nor even a piano"⁴³ in order to have a good time; always there was someone in the district who played the violin and that was all that was needed. And as surely as a dance brought out the community spirit of the settlers, it is certain

that some of the settlers brought out a different kind of spirit, guaranteed to make such an evening even more boisterous.

(v)

The Little Saskatchewan Valley was home to very different cultures in the pre-town era, yet all possessed the same reason for living near the valley. The common denominator was land. Its fertility and resources attracted and held fur traders, natives, mixed bloods and white settlers alike. The value of these resources was most transitory for the fur trader, whose unrestrained commercial enthusiasm quickly depleted the valley of its first export. Natives and mixed bloods, on the other hand, found the valley congenial as late as 1870. But as the hand of government reached westward use of the land passed beyond their control. Only for the white settler did the Little Saskatchewan Valley hold enduring promise.

Among all these people, perhaps only John Tanner understood all the cultures. He was fur trader, trapper, half-breed, farmer and entrepreneur combined. Just as his river ford allowed white settlers to cross into a valley of natives and mixed bloods, he himself bridged the gap between valley cultures. To the Little Saskatchewan he left more than the name of Tanner's Crossing; he bequeathed an example of adaptability and commercial drive which would be the hallmark and salvation of valley residents for years to come.

CHAPTER 2

TOWNSITES, RAILWAYS, AND RIVALRY

1878 - 1883

(i)

Tanner's crude bridge and thatched post office formed the nucleus of a commercial settlement in the Little Saskatchewan Valley. In the autumn of 1878 two Ontarians, James Jermyn and J.D. Gillies established a general store about half a mile south of the Crossing.¹ By March of 1879 the incipient community consisted of their store, a shoemaker, and a tailor.² Together the residents were building a schoolhouse and a church, and someone was trimming logs for a blacksmith shop. Later in the year a second general store was started by H.G. Henderson and P.J. McDermott.³ Homestead entries were averaging about twenty-five a day,⁴ and to ensure a steady flow of traffic on the trail local businessmen co-operated in the construction of a more substantial bridge. This endeavor immediately paid dividends, for the spring flood washed out every bridge on the river except the one at the Crossing.⁵ In celebration of their commercial success, the valley's merchants assembled and after lengthy debate christened the settlement Prairie City.⁶

Less than two miles northwest of Prairie City, in a pass where the Saskatchewan Trail left the valley, a second post office was started in 1878.⁷ More importantly, the Dominion government established

a Land Titles Office there in the same year.⁸ This was where the settlers filed all their land claims. Colin Inkster, visiting the site in 1878, named it Odanah, after the pass in which it was located.⁹ Soon the untapped commercial potential of the site was recognized, and in 1880 P.J. McDermott moved to Odanah where he began his own general store in a tent.¹⁰ Fluent in at least one native language, McDermott did a thriving business with Indians, mixed bloods and white settlers alike. His fledgling business was soon followed by a second general store, a hardware store, a hotel, a saw mill, and later, a photography studio.¹¹ Trading increased when, after the Crossing bridge was destroyed by a log boom, Odanah merchants built their own crossing.¹²

In the spring of 1880 local residents formed the Odanah Land Syndicate.¹³ Together they owned more than twelve hundred acres of land in the valley, three hundred and twenty of which they decided to divide into town lots. A plat was made, consisting of fifty-four blocks of more than a thousand lots. Eighty-foot streets were planned, and each block had its own back-lane. Advertisements were placed in the Winnipeg newspapers to sell the lots, with "special inducements given to enterprising businessmen."¹⁴ The reason for all this activity is clear. As one visitor to the village wrote:

Odana [sic] was to be the embryo of a great city. She [was] surveyed [and her supporters] supposed the C.P.R. [would] pass over the river at this point on its road to the Pacific coast in British Columbia.

This evaluation of the situation was penned in 1881 by William Lothian, a young Scot who worked in the logging camps of Riding Mountain, and it succinctly explains why the Odanah site had become more important to

many valley residents than Tanner's Crossing. Situated at the foot of Odanah pass, it most likely lay in the path of any railway which might be built through the Little Saskatchewan Valley. And the Canadian Pacific Railway had indeed toyed with running its transcontinental line through Odanah Pass. As early as 1878 CPR survey crews worked their way through the valley, and one route projection passed right through Odanah. "It is understood", the Manitoba Daily Free Press explained,

that owing to the grade on the south of the river a station would be impractical there and it is therefore intended to place one on the south half of section 10, about the centre of the town of Odanah.¹⁶

The result of this announcement was a frantic burst of land speculation in the valley. In August of 1880 a farmer who owned land adjacent to Odanah sold half a section for ten thousand dollars.¹⁷ CPR lands, which during the previous winter sold for four dollars an acre, now commanded more than five.¹⁸ Accompanying this speculation, and daily increasing it, were visions of commercial grandeur for the town of Odanah. The village's Canadian Pacific Hotel, which had just been moved from the Crossing, was

to expand in the future to an immense size, where speculators and all men of business were to transact business, where tourists bent on doing the great N.W.T. were to halt for a breathing moment before starting for the Rocky Mts. & in short where travellers of all countries . . . were to find comfortable apartments on shortest notice, to be waited on by the most polished waiters & all at a moderate fare [of] say 5 dollars a day.¹⁹

Odanah's promoters were convinced their village was to be the only city near the Crossing, a city to rival even distant Winnipeg.

(ii)

These dreams of metropolitan splendor, far from uncommon in the Western Canada of 1880, were dashed by the arrival of one man, J.S. Armitage. Of United Empire Loyalist stock, Armitage was born on 1 January 1849 at Newmarket, Canada West.²⁰ His father was a miller by trade, and J.S. and his three brothers had early apprenticed in their father's mill. At the age of twenty-three, young Armitage purchased his own grist mill at Port Colborne and operated it until the autumn of 1879. He then sold his enterprise and journeyed to Tanner's Crossing.

Armitage's course of action was never in doubt. Immediately after his arrival at the Crossing, he sought out John Tanner and convinced him to allow a plat to be made of eighty acres of the land he occupied.²¹ A certain Dr. R.H. Kenning, who seems to have had an interest in the land, was probably also consulted. Armitage then engaged George Bemister, a Dominion Lands Surveyor, to do the survey which was completed by mid-November (see Fig. 1). Armitage had meanwhile returned to Ontario to fetch his family and to purchase mill equipment and arrange for its shipment to Winnipeg.²² He returned to the Crossing in November to find four buildings being erected on the new townsite, two stores, a house, and a warehouse. The amount of optimism generated by Armitage's actions can be read in the fact that one of the new stores belonged to Jermyn and Gillies of neighboring Prairie City, who were preparing to move their thriving business to the Armitage site.²³ Armitage was so "full of energy", as the Manitoba

Daily Free Press commented, that once back in the valley he wasted no time in securing the timber rights to two townships on Riding Mountain.²⁴ His plans included a saw mill as well as a grist mill.

According to the local correspondent of the Free Press, the deal which Armitage had negotiated with Tanner and Kenning was that

To avoid forfeiting to Messrs. Tanner and Kenning the sum of \$5000., Mr. Armitage must have the saw mill complete and running on or before the first day of July, 1880, and the flour mill, with three run of stones, running by the first of November.²⁵

Armitage's carload of mill machinery, from the Galt firm of Goldie and McCulloch, arrived at Winnipeg late in January,²⁶ by which time the buildings were already under construction and presumably men had been hired to cut logs on Riding Mountain. Two months later Armitage, in an incredible move, purchased the entire townsite and an adjacent two hundred and forty acres from Tanner and Kenning for the sum of five hundred dollars.²⁵ Tanner retained ownership of twelve lots with river frontage. Why these two men, both experienced in business and certainly aware of the railway rumors, parted with the land so cheaply remains a mystery.

Armitage's motivations, too, are shrouded in mystery. Why would a young man with a family and a good business in Ontario,²⁸ abandon everything for a stake in a river crossing where it was rumored the Canadian Pacific might run? Why would he invest twenty-five thousand dollars in a saw mill,²⁹ and at least as much in a grist mill, unless he knew something about the railway route that other valley residents did not?³⁰ It is helpful to review the decision made with

respect to the CPR in 1879. In the spring of that year the Dominion government, under pressure from the Manitoba government and the city of Winnipeg, changed the route of the main line to run directly westward from Red River instead of northwesterly from the town of Selkirk. This meant that the railway, according to projections made in 1878, would probably cross through the Little Saskatchewan Valley at some point. Two routes had been projected, one which passed through the British colony of Rapid City, eighteen miles down the valley, and another which crossed directly through Odanah. In the summer of 1879 a third route was projected, known as the North-Western line, to follow a route "to the north-west in a straight line to the Little Saskatchewan, where the northern trail crosses the river (Tanners' [sic] Crossing) . . ." ³¹ This accounts for the rivalry which developed between Odanah and Prairie City late in 1879. It was not, however, - and this is crucial - until 22 January 1880 that the government announced its selection of the North-Western line as the route to be followed. ³² Did Armitage have advance warning? It cannot be proven, yet the circumstantial evidence certainly points to that conclusion. ³³

Armitage, whether gambler or not, created a new town in the Little Saskatchewan Valley. It was to be called Minnedosa, the euphonious Sioux word for Little Saskatchewan. ³⁴ His two mills formed the core of the town. On 1 June 1880 the first saw mill whistle blew and the first of the twenty thousand spruce logs which would be cut that summer moved through the whining saws. The mill's twenty-five horsepower steam engine turned out eight thousand board feet of lumber daily and

this was still not sufficient to meet the demand in the valley.³⁵ With migration to the valley proceeding apace, Armitage was obliged to keep his thirty skilled workmen on the job until late each evening, at an estimated profit to himself of one hundred and sixty dollars a day.³⁶ Sometime in November Armitage opened his grist mill for business.³⁷ Previously valley settlers wanting flour were forced to travel to Palestine or Grand Valley mills; now they could save time and money by patronizing the Armitage enterprise.³⁸ They came from thirty to forty miles around, and the grist mill, like the saw mill, was kept open day and night.³⁹ Within six months of opening, the Armitage mills had made Minnedosa the metropole for a substantial area.

The success of the mills was reflected in the changing face of the town. A traveller on the Saskatchewan Trail noted that from Odanah Pass he could see

a large group of houses . . . their faces nicely whitewashed and in their midst a giant building of great magnificence - the combined grist and saw-mill of Messrs. Armitage & Co at Minnedosa. The mills are its great impetus, and the stores, which are of no ordinary degree, must of themselves draw a large amount of capital into the city. The houses and the stores that I observed in course of construction reflect no small amount of credit on the city.⁴⁰

Some of the businesses of Minnedosa which now serviced the valley settlers included two general stores, two grocery stores, a furniture dealership, blacksmith shop, wagon manufactory, bakery, hardware store, butchershop, tailoring establishment, shoemaker store, and an apothecary.⁴¹ A large hotel and a meeting hall were under construction, as were undoubtedly numerous houses,⁴² and the sale of town lots was reported to be "brisk."⁴³

Still the prospect of a railway held everyone's attention. Up and down the valley the land was divided into lots and speculators waited in anticipation that the line would cross their property and instantly make them rich. William Lothian said that in the valley, "it's all a race for the dollar."⁴⁴ The race ended in February of 1881 when it became known that the CPR had abandoned the North-Western line, and would, instead, build to the south, through Grand Valley. Disappointed but undaunted, the most optimistic speculators set out for Grand Valley, took up land, and waited for the track crews to arrive. But for the majority of Little Saskatchewan people the dream of immediate riches evaporated.

Those who remained had good reasons for doing so. Speculation was risky, but farming the fertile soils of the Little Saskatchewan was not. Moreover, J.S. Armitage had given them a town, a market center in which to sell their goods and purchase the luxuries they could not manufacture themselves. And, though they could not have known it at the time, plans were already afoot to give them the railway they wanted and needed.

(iii)

Minnedosa was scarcely a year old, yet already it was exhibiting unmistakable signs of the social cohesiveness and stability that would mark its future development. There had not been, in fact, a distinct interval in which a sense of community did not prevail in the newborn town. The feeling was clearly manifested in the establishment of an institutional base shortly after settlement.

Uppermost in many minds were educational facilities, for these people had left a province where opportunities for their children were limited, and where, clearly, the educated got ahead. Unfortunately the money necessary for a schoolhouse was not readily available because of the exigencies of settlement, and as a temporary expedient a classroom was set up at the home of a 'progressive' mixed blood couple, Mr. and Mrs. John Norquay.⁴⁵ Here farm and town children attended regular classes for over a year. By August of 1880 both town and farm residents were complaining about the lack of proper educational facilities,⁴⁶ and the agitation unquestionably intensified when the Norquay family moved away a year later.⁴⁷ Finally classes were held in a log house located in Minnedosa. Though school buildings were changed several times in this decade, at no time was the provision of education discontinued.

Religion had provided a focus for community activity since the first days of settlement. Not all observers, it must be added, believed this was the case. William Lothian, for instance, claimed in 1880 that "there doesn't seem to be much real religion in the country."⁴⁸ But this was a superficial observation, based on a brief visit to a town burning with the fever of speculation. Even in the heady days of the boom, religious institutions flourished in Minnedosa, for its citizens perceived no contradiction between capitalism and Christianity. The first ministers, belonging to the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, were itinerant, but by the time of Lothian's visit Minnedosa already had regular services. Resident clergy followed in the next year. Local church organizations, probably ladies' aid groups,

were organized at least as early as December of 1880.⁴⁹ In 1881 the Methodists constructed Minnedosa's first parsonage on a plot of land donated by J.S. Armitage.⁵⁰ Within five years the town contained Presbyterian, Methodist, and Anglican churches.

Social organizations were yet another sign of the growing sense of community. In 1880 a Masonic Lodge was formed, with twelve charter members.⁵¹ The following year twenty-one Ulstermen and sympathizers began a Loyal Orange Lodge.⁵² A less exclusive club, known as the Literary and Debating Society, was organized in 1881 with J.S. Armitage as its first president.⁵³ Similarly, an open-membership Agricultural Society was founded in 1882 in the interests of more scientific agriculture.⁵⁴ Besides functioning as an educational institution, the Society sponsored a fall fair and exhibition held annually in October. These associations regularly brought together Minnedosans to discuss literary, agricultural, and other matters of common interest.

Community sporting events multiplied yearly. Football (or more probably rugby or soccer) was being played in 1879 with J.S. Armitage, John Tanner and P.J. McDermott among the players.⁵⁵ By the following year challenge cricket matches were held between Minnedosa and Rapid City teams.⁵⁶ Horse-racing was especially popular at community picnics, and on occasion valley natives would match their ponies against the horses of local farmers.⁵⁷ As early as 1881 Minnedosa had its own baseball team.⁵⁸ Teamwork, it would seem, was almost intrinsic to the local population.

Most valley settlers had come from the highly politicized

province of Ontario and they fully expected to have a voice in the affairs of their new homeland. As early as March, 1879, the residents of Prairie City were petitioning the government of neighboring Manitoba for an extension of the boundary so that they too could have a representative in the provincial legislature.⁵⁹ The question of representation was often submerged by more pressing local issues such as the railway debate, but it never disappeared. Finally in 1881 the Manitoba boundary was extended northward and westward and Minnedosa ceased to be a part of the North West Territories. As such, administrative reorganization was necessary. Under the county system of local government administration used in Manitoba between 1873 and 1883, the County of Minnedosa was created. Inclusion in the province also meant representation in the legislature and in 1881 John Crerar, a Liberal and barrister-at-law at Minnedosa, became the area's first Member of the Provincial Parliament. On the federal level the constituency of Marquette, Liberal Robert Watson's seat, was extended to include Minnedosa and the surrounding area.

The growth of the business sector both reflected and contributed to the stability which marked Minnedosa. The haste with which the speculators left the valley resulted in a period of uncertainty for local businesses, but by 1882 at least twenty-two firms were operating in town.⁶¹ Most were agriculture-related enterprises, but Minnedosa also had three lawyers, a doctor, a private banker, a druggist, an insurance salesman, and a photographer. Besides the Armitage mills, the only industry was a brick-making plant. For so young a town, Minnedosa enjoyed a full complement of basic services.

By 1883 the number of businesses had risen to at least forty.⁶² Almost twenty-three percent of these had a net worth of over five thousand dollars, with three in the ten to twenty thousand dollar range,⁶³ demonstrating that Minnedosa not only had commercial potential but was considered by businessmen to be stable as well.

Developments in education, religion, recreation, politics, and business defined Minnedosa as a community. The establishment of this institutional base was simplified by the similarity of outlook among the town's residents. In succeeding years this base would be broadened but its essential character would never alter.

(iv)

In 1881, while Minnedosa was being drawn into the political orbit of Winnipeg, politicking of a different sort was occurring within the county. The speculative fever engendered by the prospect of a railway was not yet entirely routed, and various schemes were hatched to secure the services of the Portage, Westbourne, and North Western Railway.⁶⁴ Originally called the Westbourne and North Western, this company received its provincial charter in 1880.⁶⁵ It was to build a railway from a point on the CPR mainline near Poplar Point to the western boundary of the province. In 1881 the company encountered financial problems and a controlling interest in the line was bought by Sir Hugh Allan and his associates of Montreal.⁶⁶ By 1882 the rails were laid as far west as Gladstone. Still unresolved, however, was the route which the line would follow to the boundary which had so recently been extended. Three separate parties in the immediate vicinity of Minnedosa, and one at Rapid City, openly competed to influence that

decision.

Two homesteaders from near Minnedosa, W.H. Ditch and James Leslie, set out to persuade the railway company to build across their land in exchange for a station site.⁶⁷ To this end they met with railway officials in Winnipeg, and succeeded in having a survey of the line (called the Smith survey, after Marcus Smith) made across their property. They then laid out the land in town lots, expressing their certainty that the center of population in the valley would shift in the direction of the station.

At Odanah the members of the Land Syndicate pushed the sale of town lots with renewed enthusiasm. In September of 1881 railway surveyors staked out two possible railway routes through the valley, one of which passed through their town. This touched off a second boom at the townsite and lots traded hands for between two hundred and four hundred dollars apiece.⁶⁸

The second route projection crossed the river at Minnedosa and there too boom conditions prevailed. In the spring of 1882 the Free Press correspondent reported that "the land boom has taken our village by storm and real estate has risen to a figure exceeding all expectation."⁶⁹ By March town lots were selling for four hundred to five hundred dollars, and it seems that a majority of speculators were betting the line would pass through the Crossing site.⁷⁰

The people of Rapid City, whom the CPR had also passed by in 1881, saw the PW & NW as essential to their town's future prosperity. Theirs was very much an uphill battle, however, since apparently no

route was projected through that part of the valley. Their chances of living up to the town's name were further hindered by an Ottawa official who was determined to draw speculators away from Rapid City. This was Colonel J.S. Dennis, former Deputy Minister of the Interior, who seems to have been instrumental in having the name of Rapid City deleted from some maps of the North West which had recently been issued by the Department of the Interior. C.J. Whellams, a prominent businessman and colonizer of Rapid City, wrote to Sir John A Macdonald that

I cannot but think that the opposition to the thriving and growing Town of Rapid City is largely due to the late deputy Minister [of the Interior] Col. Dennis who with his associates are interested in the proposed town of Odanah and the small village of Minnedosa.⁷¹

Macdonald was probably not involved in, nor even aware of, this scheme, for he immediately halted issuance of the maps and ordered that Rapid City be marked on them.⁷² By this time, however, the damage may well have been done, for the incident had the serious consequence of poisoning future relations between Rapid City and Minnedosa.

Rumors about the final decision on the railway line flew thick and fast in the first half of 1882 but by mid-summer it seems that the Minnedosa route was being favored. Certainly local residents were acting as though their town would secure the station. A fire brigade was organized and debentures floated for a new brick schoolhouse.⁷³ A new doctor located in Minnedosa, and he was followed by a private banker and a photographer.⁷⁴ The Free Press correspondent stated that "buildings are being erected in all parts of town, both stores and

private residences."⁷⁵ A weekly newspaper, called the Minnedosa Star, was begun by a man named W. Gibbens.⁷⁶ J.S. Armitage, having waited until the boom crested, sold his mills to a Major Douglas, reportedly for one hundred and sixty thousand dollars.⁷⁷ But probably the surest sign of the railway's imminent arrival came in July of that year, when the telegraph line reached town.⁷⁸

Negotiations with the railway company began early in August. Before the company would commit itself to the construction of a rail-line through the town, it wanted to know what bonus it would receive. Promoters of the Minnedosa site, headed by such men as Armitage, Kenning, Jermyn and Gillies, perceived two ways of raising a sizeable monetary bonus with which to turn the railway company away from the Ditch-Leslie survey. The first was to float debentures with the approval of the county. This meant securing the support of Rapid City residents, whose attention had meanwhile turned to the Souris and Rocky Mountain Railway Company which proposed to build through their town if a suitable bonus could be agreed upon. The Minnedosa group subsequently proposed three different bonus schemes, each of which provided for large sums to be used by Rapid City for the bonusing of the railway of its choice.⁷⁹ Several meetings were held, but the Rapid City representatives felt that they had been "received with great discourtesy by the people of Minnedosa" and that the "feeling there [was] strongly against working with the southern part of the county on equal terms."⁸⁰ As a result, they spurned every advance made by the Minnedosans and decided "to paddle their own canoe as in the past."⁸¹

This path blocked, Minnedosans considered the incorporation of their town in order to spearhead the bonusing movement. Advances were made to Odanah residents in an attempt to secure the support needed for incorporation under the terms of the Town Corporations General Clauses Act of 1879.⁸² Here again they met with opposition. As one Odanah resident said:

A certain ambitious village . . . has got the fever of incorporation, and is casting covetous glances towards our beautiful town plot, the once-despised Odanah, and seems very anxious to make us a portion of themselves, but the people here 'do not see it' remembering too well the old fable of the spider and the fly.⁸³

Apparently enough Odanah people were persuaded by Minnedosan entreaties, however, and with the additional support of people south and west of Minnedosa, the town was incorporated on 2 March 1883.⁸⁴

The boundaries of the town took in twenty-three quarter sections (see Fig. 2). Each quarter belonged to a supporter of the Minnedosa site, while the property belonging to Ditch and Leslie was neatly excluded. To administer the new town a civic election was held on 22 March 1883. Elected as mayor was John Crerar, and the councillors were J.A. Griffith, Dr. J.B. Hunter, B.M. Armitage, P.J. McDermott, E. Sims and R. Cowan.⁸⁵ Crerar, Hunter, Griffith and McDermott all had businesses in Minnedosa and had been strongly in favor of bonusing the railway.⁸⁶ B.M. Armitage also operated a business at the Crossing, and was J.S.'s brother. E. Sims and R. Cowan held title to 3-15-18, which was now part of the town. All had been opposed to the Smith survey.⁸⁷

Only the question of the bonus remained. A meeting, "composed of farmers from all parts of the county and numerous residents of the

newly incorporated town of Minnedosa,"⁸⁸ was held at the newly built Brunswick Hotel. After considerable discussion it was resolved to submit a proposal to the county which provided for a bonus of one hundred thousand dollars from the county and of thirty thousand dollars from the town of Minnedosa.⁸⁹ Odanah residents quickly made it clear that they refused to be pushed into anything by Minnedosa, while the Rapid City interests had washed their hands of the entire affair and were now attempting to charter their own railway. In Minnedosa negotiations continued with the Manitoba and North Western Railway Company, as it was now called, and final agreement was reached on 3 July 1883. The following day the town council voted a bonus of thirty thousand dollars, granted the right-of-way, exempted from taxes the line, its buildings, property and rolling stock for a period of twenty years, and gave the company one thousand town lots.⁹⁰ In return the town fathers asked that a passenger and freight station be built within a one-mile radius of the town center, that no other station be constructed on the line for six miles in either direction, and that the line be operational by November, 1883, and in no case later than 1 January 1884.⁹¹

Since this by-law involved considerable sums of money, provincial statute demanded that the rate-payers be given the right to request a poll. On 18 July a public meeting was held for this purpose and a large number of property owners attended.⁹² All seem to have remembered the words of County Court Judge Ryan, spoken only three weeks earlier:

We should regard the [railway] company as a power, ourselves as a circumstance, and carefully consider whether we might not by unreasonable resistance force that power to a course of action that would simply affect [sic] our ruin.⁹³

The comparison was apt and the logic undeniable. Not a single dissenting voice was heard at the meeting. Minnedosa would get its railway.

(v)

In an era when the race was to the commercially swift, the arrival of the train in Minnedosa during the first week of December, 1883, heralded the town's hegemony over much of northwestern Manitoba. Rapid City, eighteen miles down the valley, had been the loser in every railway gamble. Efforts would still be made to secure a railway, but in the end its townspeople would have to settle for an infrequently used spur from their old rival, Minnedosa. Odanah's fate was even less respectable. As soon as the M & NW decision was announced, its residents, led by P.J. McDermott, prepared to leave, many for Minnedosa where success might be more than just a dream. Within a few years Odanah was a ghost-town. It remained as such for several years, until some enterprising young ladies arrived and hung out a shingle which proclaimed, innocently enough, "Mending Done".⁹⁴ They actively pursued their profession until informed by some concerned Minnedosans that they must mend their ways or leave. Quietly they went and the last light in Odanah was snuffed out.

Like his counterpart John Tanner, J.S. Armitage had possessed the entrepreneurial drive to fill an obvious commercial vacuum. His two mills provided the focal point for an entrepot which, under his

continuing leadership, absorbed one nascent town and usurped the metropolitan aspirations of two others. His success in marshalling support for a railway branchline gave the valley a vital link with the national economy, one which permitted the growth of a viable local export economy and continued commercial progress for Minnedosa.

CHAPTER 3

ANATOMY OF THE TOWN

1883 - 1886

(i)

The Manitoba and North Western decision of 1883 brought stability to Minnedosa. Acerbic competition among neighbors gave way to a heightened sense of community. In great measure this communal feeling derived from the common British traditions that bound the townspeople. Most were Ontarians or Britons, accustomed to the constant social intercourse of the town, the proximity of church and school, the feeling of order which time-honored institutions imparted to their daily lives. They had no desire to cast off the hallmarks of their civilization, no desire to begin anew, even though they now found themselves on a culturally malleable frontier. Instead, their every action would bear out the prophecy of an anonymous observer who wrote that "in no distant day the little town in the valley will seem more like an eastern town of Ontario than the newly discovered, just put together town on the Little Saskatchewan."¹

(ii)

The population of Minnedosa was remarkably homogeneous. In 1886 five hundred and forty nine people resided in the town, over ninety-three per cent of whom were of Anglo-Saxon or Celtic descent.²

There were Americans and continental Europeans as well, but they made up no more than five per cent of the total population. Beginning in 1885 a few Scandinavians settled at Minnedosa, probably members of some of the eighty-five families which colonized the land around Otter Lake near Riding Mountain.³

Religiously, the community was divided among the Protestant trinity of Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Methodists. Together, these groups composed eighty-seven per cent of the population.⁴ Over half of the townspeople were Presbyterians, another quarter were Anglicans, and some seventeen per cent were Methodists. The rest of the people belonged to the Roman Catholic, Baptist, and Lutheran churches.

This ethnic-religious mix gave Minnedosa a cultural texture similar to that of Marquette census division, in which the town was located.⁵ The significant difference between town and country lay in the permanence of Minnedosa's cultural profile. While the district would in time be composed of representatives of many different ethnic groups, Minnedosa was largely missed by what W.L. Morton has called the "vast Amero-European influx of the next generation."⁶ Generation after generation, Minnedosa remained an Anglo-Saxon Protestant community.

As is usually the case in pioneer societies, Minnedosa's population was overwhelmingly young.⁷ More than three-quarters were less than thirty-one years of age in 1886. Twenty-six per cent of these were between the most productive ages of twenty-one and thirty-one. Again, these figures are roughly consistent with those for Marquette, where in 1886 thirty-four per cent of the people were between twenty-one and thirty-one years old. Women were usually younger than men,

both in Minnedosa and in the district.

Minnedosa was also male-dominated. This was especially noticeable during the first years of settlement, so noticeable in fact that one local man complained that "too many bachelors, young and old, are coming out here. There is likely to be a woman famine."⁸ In 1886 close to fifty-six per cent of the townspeople were male, and while this percentage decreased over the next three decades, by 1906 the ratio still stood at one hundred and six males for every one hundred females.⁹ The same imbalance obtained in Marquette.¹⁰

The family was of course the basic unit of social organization. Although it is not known what percentage of Minnedosans were married, in the period 1886 - 1906 approximately one-third of the people of Marquette were married.¹¹ Given the similarity of the two populations, the same situation probably existed in Minnedosa. Few people married before they reached their majority; forty per cent of married Minnedosans were between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-one, and a third were between the ages of thirty-one and forty-one. Divorce was virtually unknown.¹³

The birthrate in Minnedosa was very high shortly after settlement. In 1886 the crude birthrate was twenty-nine per one thousand population.¹⁴ Birthrates for subsequent years cannot be ascertained, but it is clear from the steadily growing number of children per family that the birthrate experienced no sharp decline after permanent settlement of the town. Between 1886 and 1891 the number of children per family almost doubled.¹⁵

These statistics allow one to probe beneath the surface of Minnedosan society. Revealed is a community sharing many of the characteristics of other pioneer Manitoban communities of 1886. Minnedosa was filled with young Anglo-Saxon Protestants intent on establishing hearth and home and living by strict Victorian conventions. Yet the degree to which these people dominated the town was probably far from typical, and from this cultural uniformity came Minnedosa's persistent British character.

(iii)

As soon as they arrived in the valley, these frontier Victorians began to recreate the British-Ontarian society they had left behind. Their identity was sustained and propagated through institutions. The haste with which churches were established, for example, stemmed just as much from the need to preserve identity as it did from religious fervor. Longing for the familiar, one early settler wrote:

We scarcely know how much we value the frequent services at our parish churches at home until we come to a land where there are none. It scarcely seems Sunday without the dear old bells and with no special place to worship. The Presbyterian and Methodist ministers do their best to hold a service at each end of the settlement once every month, but what is that to the two or three every Sunday to which we have so long been accustomed?¹⁶

This nostalgia was the driving force behind early social activities of the townspeople. Impelled by strong traditions, Minnedosans were remarkably successful in re-establishing civilization as they knew it.

Recreational activities illustrate this tendency to Anglicize the prairies. The fraternal organizations already mentioned - the

Masons, Oddfellows and Orange Lodge - were among the most conspicuous examples of Minnedosa's British roots. The activities of these groups were generally secret, but on the Glorious Twelfth of each year the Orangemen proudly exhibited their heritage. A newspaper account of 1885 described an Orange parade:

At about 11 o'clock the brethren of L.O.L. 1505 (Minnedosa East), marshalled by Mr. John Cameron, mounted on a grey horse to represent King William, left their Hall, headed by fife and drum band, [and] marched along Main Street
 . . . 17

Similarly, athletic activities were typically British. Soccer and horse-racing have already been noted. In later years the townspeople played lawn tennis and cricket, curled and shot skeet.¹⁸ The richest among them even played polo and rode to the hounds on occasion.¹⁹

Another part of the townspeople's intellectual baggage was a predilection for temperance. In both Ontario and Great Britain temperance had become a powerful social movement in the 1870s²⁰ and it is not surprising that an effort was also made to keep the valley dry. In 1879 the citizens of Prairie City were petitioning the Manitoba government to extend the provincial boundary not only that they might enjoy representative government but liquor traffic regulation as well.²¹ Temperance organizers were active in Minnedosa throughout the 1880s and in 1889 they stepped up their local campaign.²² By 1891 a local of the Women's Christian Temperance Union had been established.²³ When a provincial plebiscite on prohibition was held the following year, the townspeople voted two to one in favor of banning the bar.²⁴ It is probably no coincidence that in the same year the local brewery closed

its doors.²⁵

One of the most vivid characteristics of the community was its patriotism. This was evident, of course, on Victoria Day, when all businesses closed their doors and the usual entertainment consisted of a train excursion to a nearby town, followed by various sporting competitions. The identification with Canada seems to have been equally great, as Dominion Day celebrations show. The first such gala was held in 1880, and an ox was killed in honor of the occasion.²⁶ While much of the attraction of Victoria and Dominion Day celebrations was undoubtedly in the recreation, genuine sentiment for Britain and the Empire did exist. When Sir John A. Macdonald died in 1891, the local newspaper was filled with commentaries and eulogies.²⁷ The same editorial sadness attended the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, and each article was morosely bordered in black.²⁸

This patriotism came to the fore in time of crisis as well as in time of celebration. When the Saskatchewan Rebellion broke out in 1885, at least twenty-five young Minnedosans volunteered for duty with the Government forces.²⁹ They served at Gleichen, Calgary, Edmonton, Fort Pitt, and Swift Current.³⁰ At Minnedosa, a Home Guard of over one hundred men was organized³¹ under the command of E.A. Brisebois, a most unusual Minnedosan who had fought in the American Civil War and served with the army of Pope Pius IX and the North West Mounted Police.³² The stated purpose of this Home Guard was "to defend our homes, family and property against all enemies of Her Majesty Queen Victoria or her representatives in this Dominion."³³



The question of French minority rights in the province, which came to a head in 1890, elicited the same pro-British response from Minnedosans. During the 1880s the French-English balance in Manitoba had been swept away by continuing immigration from Ontario, and by the summer of 1889 Premier Greenway and his Liberal government were being encouraged to abolish Catholic schools and French language rights. This was accomplished during the legislative session of 1890. Catholic school supporters immediately went to the courts. After the Manitoba courts declared the legislation intra vires, the Supreme Court of Canada overturned this decision, and so a final appeal was made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. There it was decided that the province did indeed have the power to pass such legislation. R. Hill Myers, a prominent Minnedosa lawyer, immediately wrote to Greenway, saying that "We were greatly pleased over the decision of the Judicial Com. of the Privy Council. It crowns the fabric."³⁴ But the issue did not rest there. Manitoba's Roman Catholics applied to the Governor General in Council for remedial legislation under Section 93 of the B.N.A. Act. While the government procrastinated, Minnedosa Tribune editor David Cannon wrote that

Now while the School Question is on the boards, and before it is finally disposed of for all times it would be wise to incorporate in the expected bill a proviso requiring that the English language must be taught in every school throughout the Dominion. This Dominion is part and parcel of the British Empire, and English is the language of that empire therefore it is only meat [sic] that every British subject particularly those of this part of it should understand the language of the motherland. This step cannot be taken too soon by our Legislators, as it has even now been overlooked too long.³⁵

Given the ethnic makeup of Minnedosa, it is not at all unreasonable to suppose that Cannon's editorial reflected the views of most townspeople.

Surprisingly, the outbreak of war in the Transvaal evoked little enthusiasm among Minnedosans. About two weeks after the conflict began, David Cannon appealed to them: "Minnedosa is now about the only town of any importance in the province that is without a military company of some kind. Have we no patriots . . .?"³⁶ One week later, in what appears to be an attempt to save face, Cannon commented that several young men were willing to take up arms if any other foreign nations interfered in South Africa.³⁷ Even exhortation did little to stir the British blood in Minnedosa, and only one young man from the town is known to have enlisted.³⁸ In the countryside the situation was somewhat different, for at least sixteen men volunteered.³⁹ Perhaps it is because those who enlisted joined Winnipeg regiments that little is known about them. This suggestion is corroborated to some extent by the fact that when the war was over "a great bonfire was lit, parades were organized, and general rejoicing was evident"⁴⁰ in Minnedosa.

Minnedosans were very proud of their heritage and never hesitated to express that pride. They saw themselves, not as an isolated frontier community, but as an extension of the British Empire. The Empire's battles were their battles, its losses were their losses. However small their contribution, they were secure in the knowledge that they had done their duty.

(iv)

Even though the community was marked by consensus in most matters, very real social divisions did exist. These were not, however, the class divisions one might expect to find in an industrial town. They lacked rigidity and are therefore less amenable to precise definition. Essentially they were based on one's status within the social community. Occupation and financial standing of course played important roles in determining one's status, but there were other considerations as well. Status had just as much to do with the size and architecture of one's home, the style and fabric of one's clothes, the vacations one took (or didn't take, for that matter), and even the material of which one's grave marker was made. Beyond these and other material manifestations, it involved one's religion, ethnicity, sex, and age.

At the very bottom of the social ladder in Minnedosa, as in all communities, was a diverse group of people united mainly by their lack of money and/or respect. They can be included with those whom Gagan and Mays have called the "historically illiterate,"⁴¹ and the dearth of information about them makes identification and description doubly difficult. Certainly their numbers were not large, for that would have made them a conspicuous group and therefore one worthy of comment, derisive or otherwise. As it is, they do not figure in any personal reminiscences or newspaper editorials. Nonetheless, it is quite reasonable to suggest that some were transients who had come to town looking for work, decided to stay for a week or a month, and perhaps took a room at McKeller's boarding-house.⁴² Hotel-keeper Robert

Murdock's hired girl⁴³ and Reverend Hole's servant⁴⁴ would have been among them. Some of the few remaining Metis might have shared this status. And certainly the town drunk (or drunks), whom the good ladies of the WCTU unquestionably worked hard to reform, would fall into this category. These people, and others about whom absolutely nothing is known, made no lasting contribution to the community and were quickly forgotten as a result. In all probability, they were members of the community only by virtue of their presence.

More socially acceptable than the forgotten people, yet still comparatively low in the social hierarchy, were those whom one might call the ordinary people. Their distinguishing characteristic was that they worked for someone else on a more or less permanent basis as manual laborers or in semi-skilled and skilled positions. That they worked with their hands in most cases betrayed their relative lack of formal education. Alex. McNeilly, section foreman on the Manitoba and North Western, was one of them. W.C. Cubitt, a bookkeeper at J.D. Gillies's general store, was another. And still another was P.H. Chipman, the desk clerk at the Brunswick Hotel. The list could be extended indefinitely, for the ordinary people comprised somewhere between sixty and seventy-five per cent of the town's population in 1886.⁴⁵

The common focus of their lives was the work-week. In all likelihood, they toiled some ten or twelve hours a day, six days a week. According to the 1886 census, the average annual remuneration which an industrial worker in Marquette received for such long hours was three hundred and seventy dollars.⁴⁶ Of course wages varied with the industry.

In a saw mill, for example, a worker might earn only one hundred and seventy-two dollars per year. This was in sharp contrast to the annual wage of those working in a flour mill, which was five hundred and five dollars. There were also variations based on the amount of skill required for the task. At the local printing office, an employee could make as much as five hundred and sixty-two dollars a year.

Wages were the most important determinant of their lifestyles. Because so many hours had to be put in just to earn a living wage, very few of these people could afford vacations or extended trips. Their recreation was generally localized, consisting of participation in community sports groups, holiday celebrations and excursions, and the annual fair and exhibition. Their houses, too, showed their lack of wealth. Those earning the best wages were able to afford a log or frame house, usually of one or sometimes two storeys.⁴⁷ Men who earned less had to settle for smaller dwellings, and some could afford nothing more than a room at a hotel like the Brunswick.⁴⁸

Ordinary people were usually without influence in the community. They did not become elders of the church. They were not selected to sit on the executives of sports organizations. Their names were not found on the membership lists of fraternal organizations, nor on the rolls of the Minnedosa town council. For most, this situation persisted throughout their lives. Rare indeed was the man who, like Tribune shop foreman Harry Cuttle, not only managed to become a member of the Oddfellows and the Masons, but of the town council as well.

Merchants and professionals possessed the greatest status in Minnedosa. These were the people who, by virtue of specialized

education or unusual ability, answered to nobody but their creditors. Almost without exception, they were of Anglo-Saxon or Celtic stock, and Protestant in religion.⁴⁹ From their ranks came virtually all of the civic officials, the members of club executives, the aspirants to political office, and the members of the local Board of Trade.

Within this narrow stratum there were status gradations. Not all businessmen and professionals were active in civic affairs. If one checks their forty-eight names⁵⁰ against those found on lists of town councillors, federal and provincial politicians, Methodist Church elders, and fraternal association executives for 1885, one finds that slightly more than one-quarter were in positions of some influence. In 1887 less than one-third of them held such positions; three years later the proportion was about the same. But more striking by far is the repetition of names. The turnover rate was less than twenty per cent per year.

Aside from office-holding, conspicuousness seems to have been a good indicator of one's relative status within this upper stratum of Minnedosan society. For example, few local merchants could afford to regularly place large advertisements in the weekly Tribune, as did leading storekeepers J.D. Gillies and P.J. McDermott. Fewer still were those who, like photographer W.B. St. John, could afford to send their sons to Winnipeg's prestigious St. John's College.⁵¹ The St. John home was probably the only residence in town where the clear tones of a grand piano could be heard.⁵² When the Tribune reported in 1887 that "Fox hunting with a pack of hounds is the fashionable amusement here,"⁵³

the implication was perfectly clear. And a conspicuous minority indeed were those three Minnedosan families who could call sixteen-room edifices 'home'.⁵⁴

Money was the key to entrance to this inner circle of the community elite. While no evidence of individual worth is available for professionals, records do reveal the net business assets of almost all businessmen in Minnedosa.⁵⁵ While most fortunes ranged between five hundred and three thousand dollars in the 1880s, those who owned grist mills, lumber-yards, general stores, hotels, drug stores, and butcher-shops generally possessed a net business worth between five thousand and ten thousand dollars. These ten or twelve men, in combination with the town's leading professionals, controlled the direction and pace of civic development through the influence they wielded.

Among the powerless in Minnedosan society were women. While the townsmen almost all had jobs and were able to participate in some form of recreation regardless of their status, women were far less fortunate. In the main, a woman's status was dependent upon that of her husband. The wives of Minnedosa's leading citizens were most socially active, but even then their participation focused on church-related groups. Early in the 1880s each Protestant church organized a Ladies' Aid or its equivalent, which raised money for religious endeavors by holding innumerable teas and socials.⁵⁶ The proceeds were often used to support the Sunday School, Missionary Society, and the minister and his family. The role of women in sporting activities was similarly circumscribed. It was not until 1886 that the Tribune

could report that "a few women may now be seen participating in lawn tennis."⁵⁷ Even in the flower-arranging competitions at the annual agricultural exhibition, men carried off the prizes! In the business community, no women were found in any capacity other than milliner or seamstress until the late 1890s.⁵⁸ And politically women had no voice until 1892, when they were first permitted to vote in civic elections.⁵⁹

The social status of children was lower than that of women. As W.L. Morton has noted, Victorian children "were engendered and reared not only in love, but for their labor."⁶⁰ This probably applied to all but the wealthiest families in town. And, according to the 1886 census, some children in Marquette were employed in blacksmith shops, printing offices, and other industrial establishments before they reached the age of sixteen.⁶¹ Yet it seems likely that even these young working people did not command the respect that usually accompanies the assumption of greater responsibilities. In a society where the prevalent social mores dictated that marriage, that decisive step into adulthood, did not take place before the age of twenty-one, it would be too much to expect such respect at sixteen.

Parents also perceived children as heirs to their worldview, and they took a number of steps to ensure their rich traditions would not be forsaken by the next generation. The church, which sanctified their marriages and regulated their morals, played an important role in inculcating the 'proper' values. The agency through which this was most effectively done was the Sunday School, first organized in 1879.⁶²

The provincial school system served much the same purpose, with its heavy emphasis on history and literature. Perhaps it is significant that George Grierson, first principal of the Minnedosa school, was very fond of English history.⁶³ At home, children were unquestionably exposed to the classics of English literature. In these, and dozens of other subtle ways, the lives of Minnedosan children were regulated.

In sum, Minnedosan society was run from the top by an elite of Anglo-Saxon, Protestant men. Their power was a function of occupation and financial standing. To people without a share of that power, life meant hard work or low status, or both.

(v)

A writer for the Nor'-West Farmer and Manitoba Miller commented in 1886 that Minnedosa was an ideal community for "men of enterprise and moderate capital."⁶⁴ This was certainly true, for while the town could already boast a full complement of commercial services, it still had plenty of room for industrial expansion. In the three years since the directors of the Manitoba and North Western decided to run their line past Armitage's mills, the empty land between his site and the south wall of the valley had filled with stores and stables and offices.⁶⁵ Main Street became the town's thoroughfare and the heart of the business district. The streets that ran perpendicular to Main were lined with houses, far away from the noise and smoke of the mills and railyards. The three Protestant churches were located two blocks west of Main, fittingly distant from the business district. There were still vacant lots in the town's

grid, but the growth of the next decade would fill them.

Few buildings rose more than a storey or two above street level. Of the one hundred and nine homes in Minnedosa, most were only a storey or a storey and a half.⁶⁶ The Wellwood residence, built in 1884, was probably typical.⁶⁷ One storey high, it was constructed of dovetailed logs, with a gable roof and a gable dormer over the front entrance. Over the log walls was placed cove drop siding, which gave the house a neater appearance. Those residents with a little more capital, like J.S. Armitage, built larger structures.⁶⁸ His one and a half storey home was similar to Wellwood's in materials and style, but it was set upon a stone foundation and distinguished by a chimney at each end. Adjacent to many homes were small barns, cattle pens, and backyard privies.⁶⁹ Livestock could still be found all over town and flocks of chickens filled many backyards.⁷⁰

Lining Main Street south of the river were about twenty-five or thirty stores and office-buildings, mainly of wood construction and false-fronted. Half a dozen other stores, the Saskatchewan and Brunswick Hotels, the Tribune office and a bank were located on Minnedosa Street, which crossed Main at its southern extremity. If one stepped into a general store like McDermott's, one would immediately notice "all sorts of intriguing smells - of plug tobacco and blackstrap, and paints and varnishes."⁷¹ The walls were lined with shelves that reached to the ceiling and held all sorts of dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes, groceries, hardware, crockery, farming tools and other items.⁷² From the ceiling hung harness and hardware,

and sometimes pieces of salt pork.⁷³ Apples, flour, and sugar were displayed in huge barrels placed strategically away from the high box stove. Often several men crowded around that stove, discussing crops and the weather, or playing a friendly game of checkers. In such places was the business of the day conducted.

North on Main Street, across the wooden bridge, was Minnedosa's 'industrial area'. The first building one came to was Armitage's four-storey, red frame flour mill.⁷⁴ The huge building was cold and poorly lighted inside and filled with wheels, belts, funnels, spouts and hoppers, all dusted with white flour.⁷⁵ Driving the three run of four-foot stones was a large steam engine located on the lower level.⁷⁶ In 1887 these stones were replaced with steel rollers,⁷⁷ the latest invention of the flour milling industry. Adjoining the grist mill was the saw mill, containing a planing and matching machine, shingle and lath machines, edger and slab saws, and a large lumber saw.⁷⁸ Across the street, about a block and a half up the tracks, was the Ogilvie Elevator, and still farther west was Johnson's elevator. These were the highest structures in Minnedosa, rivalled only by the smokestack alongside Armitage's mills. The squat railway station faced Ogilvie's elevator. Another block or so north was an implement dealership belonging to John Watson, and a blacksmith shop owned by R.B. Rook. In 1888 Rook, too, began to sell farm machinery.⁷⁹ The only other buildings in this end of town were a bakery, grocery store, general store, hotel, Land Titles Office, and Post Office.

The railway was responsible for much of this commercial

development. Because it linked Minnedosa with the markets of Winnipeg and Eastern Canada, the town became an agricultural entrepot of the first order in northwestern Manitoba. In 1883 two local men began buying grain at Minnedosa for shipment to the East.⁸⁰ That same year, during the week that the first train arrived, the Ogilvie Flour Milling Company of Montreal announced plans to build a flat warehouse in town.⁸¹ These plans changed and an elevator was built instead, and the company began purchasing grain in the second week of January, 1885.⁸² The railway also encouraged cattle-buying. Patrick Burns, who would later become a millionaire beef baron, shipped many of his first cattle from Minnedosa,⁸³ as did at least two other buyers.⁸⁴ In addition, the railway created employment, not only for station agent J.G. Henry,⁸⁵ but also for an unknown number of laborers who found work in the yards, especially after Minnedosa became a divisional point in 1887. In these ways, the railway stimulated the entire local economy. Businesses rose in number from twenty-two in 1882 to forty in 1883.⁸⁶ The value of assessed property skyrocketed from \$173,175 in 1882,⁸⁷ to \$613,296 in the next year.⁸⁸ Greater capitalization of businesses occurred simultaneously with a boom in the construction industry.

The early success of Minnedosan entrepreneurs encouraged extensive investment by outside capitalists. Most of this came from four types of firms: agricultural implement dealers, mortgage and loan companies, insurance companies, and real estate companies. With respect to the implement dealers, most of the parent companies were located

in Ontario or in Winnipeg. Such investment began as early as 1881 when the Winnipeg firm of E. Kelly set up a dealership in town.⁸⁹ By 1883 the number of implement firms had risen to six with the Massey and Harris companies dominating the field. Information on the activities of insurance, finance, and real estate companies dates from 1889,⁹⁰ although their influence was surely felt before then. These were a mixture of Canadian, British and American operations. In 1889 Minnedosa had three real estate companies, three life insurance agencies, five different mortgage and loan firms, and eight fire insurance companies. Their success was at least in part attributable to the fact that all were run on a franchise basis, with the franchise holders being local people in every case. Of the nineteen firms mentioned, all were run by local lawyers, representing three different law firms.⁹¹

Financing local development did not, however, fall exclusively to the mortgage and loan firms of Eastern Canada. Minnedosa's first banking institution was a private firm started by J.W. Wallis and A.W. Ramsay in 1882.⁹² It lasted for a decade, and was then replaced by the Commercial Bank of Winnipeg,⁹³ an outgrowth of the private Winnipeg firm of McArthur, Boyle and Campbell.⁹⁴ But even this chartered bank did not last past 1893,⁹⁵ and in September of that year E.O. Denison, former manager of the Commercial, established his own private bank.⁹⁶ This situation lasted until 1898 when the Union Bank moved into town and persuaded Denison to become its manager.⁹⁷ At the same time two fox-hunting gentlemen named Vere Harry Pickering and Ernest Bampfylde Saltwell organized Minnedosa's last private bank.⁹⁸ After 1905, only chartered banks operated in the town.⁹⁹

Between 1883 and 1886 the dreams of Minnedosa's own 'men of enterprise and moderate capital' materialized. The railway transformed the local economy from one of subsistence to one of export, and general prosperity resulted. Investment burgeoned, employment prospects improved, population increased, and business profits swelled. One vacant lot after another was purchased and new homes and new commercial developments lined the streets. The future must have appeared bright indeed.

(vi)

The first generation of Minnedosans brought their identity with them from Ontario and Great Britain just as surely as they brought their possessions. Although it probably never occurred to them, their commission was to recreate the world they left behind. This they did quite incidentally, by living as they had always lived. Their holidays were British-Canadian holidays and their pastimes British-Canadian pastimes. In their families paternal authority was unquestioned and in their society each person knew his place. Progress was their creed and success their goal. This identity served them well during their first decade of community-building.

Still, it must not be supposed that their achievement was due solely to their exertions. It depended far more upon opportunity, upon settling a land where the obstacles to change were minimal. Had a culture with more strength than that of the natives been entrenched in the valley, the task of these frontier Victorians would have been much more difficult. And, had it not been for the Manitoba and North Western decision of 1883, they would have had no good reason for staying in the valley of the Little Saskatchewan.

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNITY OF INTERESTS

1887 - 1895

(i)

On the night of Wednesday, September 9, 1886, members of the Minnedosa town council met, conversed briefly, and then resigned en masse.¹ Their poor management of Minnedosa's affairs had plunged the town into insolvency, from which it would not fully recover until 1948. This fiasco disclosed, in no uncertain terms, the capricious nature of a wildly inflationary economy. It revealed as well something of the foibles of men. But most importantly, it placed in bold relief Minnedosa's solid agricultural underpinnings.

The crash of 1886 meant that the relationship between town and country was no longer refracted through the distorting prism of the boom, and consequently it emerged with exceptional clarity. The base of the relationship was economic, for town leaders realized as never before that settling the hinterland and accommodating the needs of its inhabitants was the only way to guarantee the growth of their town. The farmers reciprocated in the only way they could, by patronizing Minnedosa's business establishments instead of those of other service centers. Not unnaturally, the deepening of the economic relationship between town and country preserved the existing social bond. Their mutual concern about the local agricultural economy

created between them a true community of interests.

(ii)

Minnedosa's insolvency gave the town no claim to uniqueness. The summer of 1886 saw many Manitoba towns default on their debt payments. Portage la Prairie was the first to collapse, Emerson was next, and then Neepawa, Gladstone, Minnedosa, East Selkirk, Morris, West Lynn, and Rapid City followed in quick succession.² All had over-extended themselves in the halcyon days of the land boom when credit was plentiful and easily obtained. By 1885 the boom was over, leading to a deflation of land values and thus to a collapse of town revenues. Minnedosa's plight can be read in its declining property assessment values. From a high of \$631,021 in 1884, it moved slowly downward, reaching \$534,800 in 1885, and by 1889 (the next year for which there are figures) it had plummeted to \$271,131.³ The only avenue of escape from this financial debacle, it seemed, was negotiation with the town's creditors.

Minnedosa was peculiarly hard-pressed by its debt of over seventy thousand dollars.⁴ In contrast to other towns, which had their debts reduced by government legislation, Minnedosa's struggle for debt-free status was retarded by government intransigence. To the town's credit, it may be said that its representatives labored incessantly to reach a settlement with its creditors. Negotiations were conducted through a local barrister, R. Hill Myers.⁵ Over a period of almost a year, Myers attempted to reach a settlement and as the winter of 1887 drew near it appeared that he had been successful. Several

principal bondholders had agreed to extend the time of payment and to reduce the debenture interest rate.⁶ A major bondholder, A.T. Drummond of Montreal, approached the provincial government to introduce a bill embodying a plan of settlement upon which the principal creditors and the town agreed. The bill was never introduced, probably because the legislature was preoccupied with the prickly question of federal disallowance of provincial railway charters. Minnedosa's first avenue of escape from insolvency was blocked.

Attempts to legislate the problem away were renewed the following session. This time the appeal for assistance was to a new government, as Thomas Greenway's Liberals had assumed the mantle of power from a politically impotent Harrison government in January, 1888. As early as March, the town was aware that Greenway's Attorney-General, Joseph Martin, would shortly introduce a bill to aid Portage la Prairie in its crisis.⁷ At this point the solution of Minnedosa's financial problem became the idée fixe of R. Hill Myers. Before coming to Minnedosa in the early 1880s, Myers had been very active in Liberal politics in the Ontario riding of North Perth.⁸ And now, despite all his disclaimers, he was seeking the Liberal nomination in Minnedosa riding. Consequently, his political success was in large measure dependent upon a successful settlement of Minnedosa's affairs. His anxiety was clearly revealed in a letter to Greenway in March of 1888:

Our town is in a very bad condition and we look to your govt to legislate us out of the difficulty at the coming session. We all understand that the Atty Genl is going to put through an Act favoring the Portage and I do hope & would earnestly request that you persuade him to include our Town in his measure of relief.⁹

That Myers was concerned about more than the fate of the town becomes quite evident in the next paragraph:

This [relief] will help me here very much but don't let Gillies [the incumbent M.P.P.] get credit for the matter . . . He expects to steal Martin's ideas in the Portage bill & adapt them to our case & bring in a bill himself.¹⁰

Myer's political sense certainly overshadowed his scruples, for J.D. Gillies, local merchant and member for East Minnedosa, was indeed planning such a move. On 31 August 1888 Gillies succeeded in introducing a bill which provided for the immediate reorganization of Minnedosa under a limited levy liability, with the added provision that one month after reorganization a provincial commission would be appointed to investigate the town's affairs, and that its findings would be binding upon the town.¹¹ The Gillies bill never got past first reading, for Attorney-General Martin moved that it be given the six month's hoist. Why this was done is not entirely clear, although it may have been nothing more than a tactic to discredit Gillies and strengthen the Liberal position in Minnedosa. Certainly it was not done simply to enhance Myer's political stature. Myer's second place finish in the election of 1888 and Greenway's subsequent coolness towards him attest to that. Whatever the reason for the delay, the excuse Greenway gave the townspeople was that no action could be taken until a commission had first investigated the town.¹² The response of Minnedosans was bitter:

A great deal of the time of the Government has been devoted to the affairs of the town of Portage la Prairie . . . but of course this was only natural as Mr. Martin has large interests in Portage. Minnedosa on the other hand not only has not a Minister representing it but it would not even send a supporter of the Government to the House. Therefore it must be punished . . .¹³

Finally, in November, 1888, the government appointed the desired commission. In mid-December its report was released. Its recommendations were, in brief, that the town be acquitted of all charges of extravagance respecting the railway bonus and its other debts, that the interest rate on the debentures be scaled down to a level which the town could afford, and that a tax levy of no more than two and a half cents on the dollar be imposed on the townspeople.¹⁴ With both town and creditors agreeing to accept the commission's recommendations, the next move was up to the government. In February of 1889, Martin introduced a bill which allowed Minnedosa to reorganize and to issue new debentures.¹⁵ It also provided for a new officer of the town, the clerk and treasurer, with complete control over town spending. Though this provision was little appreciated by the townspeople,¹⁶ they had no choice but to accept the legislation if they wished to reorganize the town corporation. By 8 August 1889 regular council meetings were being held.

(iii)

The Act of 1889 cleared up the town's immediate problem but at the same time it circumscribed the opportunities for future civic development. Without control over the town budget, the councillors were unable to induce new businesses and industries to Minnedosa through the bonusing system. This led the councillors to petition the provincial government to assume responsibility for at least part of the bothersome debt.¹⁷ It also occasioned a reassessment of the town's relationship with its agricultural hinterland.

The role of Minnedosa in the relationship was of course that of retail and service center. This was the legacy of men like J.S. Armitage, P.J. McDermott, J.D. Gillies, and others. Armitage's success in securing the services of the Manitoba and North Western in 1883 had made the town a commercial entrepot, a fact reflected in the fundamentally commercial nature of its business sector. Industries were few, and those that did exist - the grist mill, the saw mill, the brickyard, the brewery, and the creamery - unquestionably sold much of their production to, or serviced, farmers of the hinterland. With nowhere else to turn, the town councillors of 1886 embarked on a sustained campaign to improve that relationship.

The enthusiasm of the councillors for such a campaign was buttressed by the exhortations of men such as David Cannon, owner and editor of the Tribune. Cannon, a thirty-year veteran of the newspaper business,¹⁸ firmly believed that all progress was good and he did everything in his power to convince town leaders of the same. His editorial page never ceased boosting the town and its virtues, the advantages of the surrounding farmlands, and the great opportunities which both held for immigrant and investor alike. Each week an editorial called for some civic improvement to enhance the attractiveness of the town to entrepreneurs, or for some communications improvement - a road, a railway, better mail delivery - to bring business to Minnedosa.

His weekly entreaties were scarcely needed, for the town leaders were cast in the same Victorian mold. Like Cannon, they

perceived that communications links with the hinterland were one sure way of luring customers into Minnedosa. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s the council sought support for road-building schemes, new bridges and culverts, and gravelled approaches to town. To this end numerous petitions from council and citizens alike were made to the provincial and federal government,¹⁹ and at times directly to government leaders like Sir John A. Macdonald.²⁰ These requests for financial assistance met with some success as shown, for example, by the construction of the Lake Dauphin road from Gartmore to Minnedosa in 1889.²¹

Better roads not only brought more customers to Minnedosa, they also encouraged Minnedosans to take their goods to the hinterland. The first to do so was probably a young tinsmith named Thomas Taylor, who "made a venturesome trip over the [Riding] Mountain with a load of tinware to sell to the settlers."²² A more common approach in later years was to establish branch stores in the outlying villages. The first such endeavor began in 1889, when the cattle-buying firm of Taylor Brothers opened an office in Franklin, a village some eight miles to the east.²³ At the height of expansion in 1904, four Minnedosans had branches in three neighboring villages.²⁴

Expansionist efforts did not end with attempts to reach as much as possible of the existing market. The town council, often acting in conjunction with the Board of Trade, seriously tried to increase the size of the market by propagandizing Minnedosa and its farmlands to potential immigrants. Working with the Allan Steamship line and the Canadian Pacific Railway,²⁵ they distributed hundreds of leaflets to Great Britain, Eastern Canada, the United States, and northern Europe.²⁶

A leaflet of 1886, probably typical of most, began as follows:

Free homesteads, railway and government lands and improved farms now awaiting settlement. All are well suited to mixed farming. Excellent soil, good water, abundance of hay, and fuel, and a healthy climate. The town of Minnedosa offers a good market and cheap provisions; is the most important grain and stock centre on the Manitoba and North-Western Railway, and is within easy distance of Minnipeg [sic] . . . ²⁷

The distribution of this literature was expedited by the fact that N.D. Ennis, real estate partner of J.S. Armitage and colonizer in his own right, had a brother who was the passenger agent for the Allan line at Liverpool, England.²⁸ Armitage no doubt did his share too, once appointed Provincial Immigration agent in 1887.²⁹

Minnedosa's civic officials and real estate agents were not alone in their efforts to settle the hinterland. In 1887 David Cannon wrote, with that singular prescience which was his trademark,

Let every citizen become what they are in the United States, an immigration agent, then you will have another boom. Not ³⁰ an evanescent one, but rather one of steady solid prosperity.

That same year his call seems to have been answered. The Reverend Mark Jukes, local pastor of the Church of England, journeyed to England and lectured to potential immigrants in many towns, pointing out the advantages of Manitoba in general and of Minnedosa in particular.³¹ His successor, Reverend Francis R. Hole, continued this work,³² and broadened it to include the settlement of "gentlemen's sons" on farms in the Minnedosa area.³³

The town's propagandist strategy provided for the arrival of settlers as well. In 1886 the town fathers voted funds for a caretaker and fuel for an immigration shed, on the condition it would be

built by the Dominion government.³⁴ The shed was completed in the autumn of that year and was used throughout the next decade.

Minnedosa's courtship of distant settlers was challenged by neighboring communities. Neepawa, a busy town some eighteen miles east on the tracks, and Rapid City openly competed for the hinterland which had belonged to the Minnedosa of 1880. This hinterland took in smaller centers like Newdale, Clanwilliam, Bethany, Franklin, Basswood, and Hun's Valley, and the territory around them.³⁵ The trading area formed a circle, perhaps thirty miles across, with Minnedosa as its center. Because of the Lake Dauphin road, Minnedosa had also succeeded in tapping the expanding market north of Riding Mountain. Throughout much of the period, Neepawa contested Minnedosa's claim to this trade, but both centers were eliminated from the competition by the founding of Dauphin in 1896. Dauphin's growth as a rail center, its proximity to Minnedosa's northern hinterland, and the growth of farm population in its own district made it the undisputed metropole for northern settlers.

It took two decades to settle the territorial feud involving Rapid City, Minnedosa, and Neepawa. Postal money order receipts, probably the best available index of economic activity, indicate that Minnedosa clearly led the field until 1888 when Neepawa moved ahead.³⁶ Neepawa maintained its lead for a decade and a half, while Rapid City and Minnedosa jockeyed for second place. By 1907-08 the contest was over. Rapid City's trade began to decline, while Minnedosa challenged and caught up to Neepawa. Population figures tell the same story.³⁷

By 1901 both Minnedosa and Neepawa contained over one thousand people, twice as many as Rapid City. The latter town peaked at seven hundred and thirty-eight citizens in 1906 and then started to lose population.

By 1907 the division of hinterland was complete. Rapid City could blame much of its failure on its location at the end of a spur-line from Minnedosa.³⁸ Few trains came to it and those that did were probably emptied of their immigrant loads on the mainline, at Neepawa or Minnedosa. The infrequency of train service removed what remained of its potential as an entrepot. Minnedosa and Neepawa, by contrast, developed in tandem after 1907. Their conflict was resolved, it seems, through compromise. Neepawa's trade area expanded mainly eastward, while that of Minnedosa went in the opposite direction.

The inhabitants of this hinterland made their living from mixed farming. The well-drained, naturally fertile, northern black earth soils produced good yields of oats and wheat and high quality barley.³⁹ Indeed, so successful were the crops of the area that in 1887 wheat grown on the R.P. Fraser farm near Clanwilliam took top honors at the Toronto fair.⁴⁰ Livestock and poultry, and the sale of their products, were also of some importance to the economy of the hinterland, but the ability to purchase and maintain herds and flocks was largely dependent upon the success of field crops.

Between 1886 and 1896 Minnedosa's hinterland experienced considerable internal change.⁴¹ The population more than doubled through continuing immigration, and the number of resident farmers increased by over forty-four per cent. After 1891 there was a shift away from

livestock, as farmers began to invest more capital in horses and land. Between 1886 and 1896 the average farm size increased by about one hundred acres, and the cultivated acreage doubled. Land values rose by a few dollars per acre despite the depression of 1893-1895 and thus it seems that by 1896 farmers were better off than ever.

The rapport which the townspeople of Minnedosa established with the farmers of the hinterland saved the town from economic backsliding during the depression years. Despite some initial decline immediately following the collapse of 1886, Minnedosa's business sector remained remarkably stable until 1895, after which the number of businesses and their capitalization again began to rise.⁴² Since the business sector was fundamentally commercial, this stability may quite reasonably be attributed to the loyal patronage of the farm population.⁴³

(iv)

The bonds of economy can be a source of unity or a source of division. In Minnedosa, where agriculture was the only guarantee of economic stability, townspeople and farmers co-existed harmoniously. Those who operated retail stores and service industries dared not abuse their customers through exorbitant prices, for to do so was to alienate the custodians of their security. And, given the competitive nature of Minnedosa's business sector,⁴⁴ to raise one's prices too high was to commit commercial suicide. The farmers, it is reasonable to suggest, patronized Minnedosa establishments because their proximity to the town made it convenient to do so. Differences of opinion must surely have occurred, but never were these of such magnitude as to leave an

impression on the historical record.

Reinforcing this community of interests was the ethnic and religious homogeneity of the area. Both town and country were overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon and Protestant. The largest minority group was Scandinavian, but they too were Protestant. David Cannon probably spoke for the entire community when he wrote that

Scandinavians are among the best settlers that [sic] have come to make their homes here. . . . Nothing but continued and industrious plodding which in time brings them the reward they are looking forward to, and places them on an even footing with the rest of Canada's citizens.⁴⁵

Not until years later, when Eastern Europeans settled in the district, would there exist any hint of cultural antipathy.

The social community between townspeople and farmers was most evident in the institutions they shared. The Masonic Lodge, for example, held its meetings at the home of R.A. Cowan, a farmer who lived west of town, until a meeting hall could be obtained.⁴⁶ The lodge's charter membership included residents of both town and country.⁴⁷ The same fraternity of town and country obtained in the creation of the Loyal Orange Lodge.⁴⁸ The experience was repeated in 1884 when an Oddfellow's Lodge was started.⁴⁹ The integrated membership of these organizations was perpetuated down to the turn of the century,⁵⁰ a point of no small significance when one considers the inconvenience to farmers that town meetings presented.

An Agricultural Society, designed to promote a more 'scientific' agriculture, was formed at Minnedosa in 1882. Papers were regularly given on topics such as "Sowing Grain on Stubble Without Plowing" and "Winter Dairying".⁵¹ The membership of this organization was, as would

be expected, dominated by farmers. Nevertheless, its ranks always included some local businessmen, eloquent testimony to the agrarian outlook of Minnedosans.⁵²

This outlook came naturally to many residents of the town. Men like tailor Allan Livingston, carpenter Fred Blankstein, merchant George Black, mill-owner James Jermyn, engineer Moses Stewart, and a host of others all farmed before they practised their trades in Minnedosa.⁵³ At the same time, some men who farmed were also employed in town. As soon as Robert McAree's sons were old enough to run the farm, he took work in P.J. McDermott's general store and for twelve years spent only his weekends with his family in the country.⁵⁴ The stonemason, T.D. Taylor, who built nearly every stone building in Minnedosa, was a farmer until his retirement in 1926.⁵⁵ And David Cannon, Tribune owner and editor, farmed north-east of town and each morning travelled eight miles to work.⁵⁶ Other examples could be cited, but they all point to the fact that the roots of Minnedosan society were agrarian.

The existence of a common heritage, common economic interests, and common social activities all indicate that this town-country community was marked by consensus. The best way to test this conclusion is to examine the town's power structure, for the willingness to share power is surely the truest test of trust. Power to affect development in Minnedosa, as in any small town, has always resided with the town council and the Board of Trade. Of the Board of Trade in this period, little is known. It was formed in 1887⁵⁷ as a merchants' response to the collapse of the town corporation, and was disbanded about 1890 when

Minnedosa's financial situation seemed to be improving. Being an organization for the advancement of mercantile interests, the Board of Trade did not number farmers among its membership. The town council, however, was not such an exclusive body.

In the late nineteenth century, all seven positions of Minnedosa's town council were open to anyone who could meet certain legal requirements.⁵⁸ Council aspirants had to be literate, adult males who were Canadian by birth or naturalization. They were required to live, or own a business, in Minnedosa. Furthermore, they had to possess real property worth a specified amount; if a man was seeking the mayoralty, he was required to own property worth one thousand dollars; if a councillor's chair was more to his liking, the amount was five hundred dollars. The residence and property qualification requirements obviously lessened the likelihood of farmers being elected to council, and that fact makes their success quite remarkable. In the period 1883 - 1895, seventy-seven terms of office were available on Minnedosa's council, and these were served by thirty-six men. Four of these men were farmers, and together they served eleven terms.⁵⁹ In view of the legal obstacles to farmer participation in civic government, this is an impressive showing. And it is even more impressive when one notes that after 1896 not a single farmer was ever elected to the town council.

(v)

In 1886 Minnedosa's metropolitan pretensions ended. The townspeople had been riding on a wave of prosperity, and when the wave broke, they suddenly realized the truth about their existence. The town in

which they lived was a country town and could not pretend to be more. Resourceful as always, town leaders took steps to complete settlement of the hinterland and to capture as much of its trade as possible. In this they were aided by the good relations, born of common identities and common interests, which had always prevailed between themselves and local farmers. As a result Minnedosa delineated a modest but respectable trading and service hinterland by 1907.

Minnedosa became a third-tier service center. It was not, and could no longer ever hope to be, another Winnipeg. Nor did it rank with centers like Brandon or Portage la Prairie. Instead, it shared the trade of a small yet productive area with Neepawa, and to a lesser extent, with Rapid City. The commercial domination of these centers was essentially determined by the variety of services they offered hinterland residents. A village like Franklin, with a population of perhaps two hundred, contained three grain elevators, two general stores, a church, a machine shop, two butchers, two blacksmiths, a hotel, and a few other retail outlets.⁶⁰ Minnedosa, with more than five times this population, offered these basic agricultural services plus grist and saw mills, cattle buyers and shippers, agricultural implement dealers, pump repair service, and a wagon-maker. Furthermore, it possessed a doctor, a banker, three law firms, insurance agencies, and a drugstore. Still further, it had a curling rink, a print shop, jewelry store, bookstore, and a photographer.⁶¹ These services drew customers to town like iron filings to a magnet and led, in time, to the accretion of a loyal clientele.

CHAPTER 5

COMMUNITY BREACHED

1896 - 1911

(i)

As the nineteenth century yielded to the twentieth, the first serious fissure appeared in Minnedosa's traditional town-country continuum. An early expression of the social fragmentation which all Canada would experience in this era of "great transformation",¹ its arrival went unnoticed by the people it most affected. The nature of the change was so subtle that it could be known only by its results.

In the countryside the last homestead quarters were being taken up as Clifford Sifton's aggressive immigration policies finally bore fruit. At the same time, those farmers who had been on the land for many years, decades in some cases, were becoming conscious of their unenviable position in the national economy. The vagaries of dryland farming made life precarious enough; they did not deserve the antagonism of the government and the 'interests' too. With surprising speed the isolated pockets of discontent were melded into purposeful organizations and the message of agrarian reformism began to spread. The Minnedosan hinterland was far from immune.

In the town, too, the mood was changing, and soon a "reckless optimism fired every enterprise."² Of its source there can be no doubt. Recovery of the national economy after decades of intermittent depression

boosted spending power and encouraged new investment. Simultaneously, civic improvement captured the public mind, and town competed with town to see which could modernize the fastest.

Before 1900, then, rural society was a remarkably self-contained world, where all roads led to towns like Minnedosa, and where the gaze of most townspeople extended to the rim of their hinterland and no farther. After 1900 both townspeople and farmers were drawn into the influential communications web that radiated from Winnipeg, and they began to develop very different worldviews.

(ii)

Throughout the 1880s farm settlement fanned out from Minnedosa and became progressively more dense. In 1886 the population of the hinterland was about thirty-five hundred; five years later it had climbed to over fifty-eight hundred.³ The settlers had essentially the same backgrounds and aspirations as the townspeople, and not unnaturally they desired the same sorts of institutions. Yet most were too distant from town to share its schools and churches and post office. As a result, country schools and churches were built, and Ottawa was besieged with requests for decentralized post facilities. These institutions became the foundation of a self-contained agrarian society.

Early settlers were not without means⁴ and as soon as they had established their homesteads they turned to the erection of a schoolhouse. About seventy per cent of the school districts in Minnedosa were formed by 1890, and most of the others were started in the

following decade.⁵ This not only indicates that farm settlement proceeded swiftly, but that homesteaders were as eager as townspeople to re-establish their traditional institutions. Just as importantly, it reveals that probably the only settlers to use Minnedosa's educational facilities were those immediately adjacent to the townsite.

The building of country churches was in part a response to the same problem of distance and in part a response to the religious uniformity of each district. As settlers arrived, they tended to choose homesteads in those districts where they knew people, and when this was not possible, in those where most of the settlers were of the same ethnic and religious background. Minnedosa's hinterland quickly became a patchwork of ethnic and religious groups, with Scandinavians to the far north and to the south, Hungarians to the north-east, and English and Scotsmen in a circle with Minnedosa as its center. The general religious homogeneity of each district made the co-operative erection of churches a much easier task. By 1900 almost every district had its own church.⁶

Schools and churches provided the focus of country social activities. The church drew farmers together each Sunday, or at least as often as services were held. The school often doubled as a church until a proper house of worship could be built. And just as frequently the school served as a meeting place for community clubs and municipal councils, as a dancehall, and as a gathering place for Christmas concerts and summertime picnics.⁷ Whatever its use, the school functioned as an integrating force in the emerging farm community.

The demand for rural post offices was yet another expression

of the farmer's relative immobility. Time was a precious commodity in the early settlement period and few farmers could afford the luxury of spending an entire day travelling to Minnedosa and back merely to fetch the mail. Undoubtedly, if the trip for mail could not be combined with some practical purpose such as the purchase of a much-needed threshing machine belt, or the posting of important letters, it was not made. Often a farmer who found himself in town for some reason picked up the mail of his neighbors and delivered it on his way home.⁸ To former Ontarians, as most of these farmers were, such irregular mail delivery probably seemed inadequate. For such reasons local farmers clamored for more rural post offices. The Dominion government acceded to many of their demands, and by 1900 there were probably about a dozen post offices in the hinterland.⁹

More than separate institutions, however, distinguished certain sparsely-populated parts of the hinterland. In those districts where Scandinavians, Hungarians, and later Poles and Ukrainians settled, language set them apart as well. The Scandinavian settlers were clustered around the villages of Erickson and Scandinavia near the Rolling River which meandered between the hills of Riding Mountain, and by 1901 they numbered about five or six hundred.¹⁰ To the south-east farmed a small group of Hungarians - less than a dozen families - who had established a colony there named Hun's Valley in 1885 or 1886.¹¹ A few miles north of this settlement, near Polonia and Mountain Road, a number of Polish and Ukrainian families homesteaded after 1900.¹² In the schools and churches of these groups no English was spoken.¹³

During the penultimate decade of the nineteenth century, the

institutional base for a distinctive agrarian society was established. This base was enlarged with the completion of settlement during its final decade. The only farmers who did not share these rural institutions were those in close proximity to Minnedosa. Certain parts of the hinterland were further differentiated from the town by language. Still further, farmers were of course distinguished from townspeople by the type of market in which they sold their goods. Yet as late as the turn of the century, no serious divisions existed between the two communities. This was because the countryside was not a unified community; rather, it was fragmented into scores of districts. There was interaction between these districts, but in the main the residents of each structured their daily lives around local institutions.

(iii)

The insularity of the farm districts was eventually transcended by a philosophy of agrarian reformism which had been fostered locally since the early 1880s. In January of 1884 farmers of the district east of town were holding meetings to decide on the advisability of establishing a Grange local.¹⁴ This was a response to a circular issued by Neepawa merchants which announced that they would no longer conduct business on a credit basis. Although meetings were held in various parts of the area, little seems to have come of them.

Possibly these malcontents were absorbed into the newly-formed Manitoba and North West Farmers' Union. In February of the same year a Little Saskatchewan local, consisting of about thirty members, was formed in the rural municipality of Saskatchewan.¹⁵ The

Union, as James A. Jackson has succinctly written,

wanted free trade in all farm commodities, including those which were used on the farm as well as those which were produced by it; customs tariffs for revenue only, and not for the protection of industry; provincial control of public or Crown lands; provincial freedom to charter railways whenever and wherever needed; municipal freedom to build and operate grain elevators and flour mills; uniform grain inspection and grading; and the immediate consideration of the construction of a railway to Hudson Bay.¹⁶

As a Little Saskatchewan delegate made clear at the Union's Winnipeg convention in March, many valley farmers were completely in sympathy with these goals.¹⁷ The Union lasted for more than a year after this convention, but radicalism within its leadership and a growing identification with the province's nascent Liberal party spelled its eventual demise.

For nearly a decade local farmers lacked an organization through which they could articulate their grievances. Then, in 1891, a provincial association of the Order of the Patrons of Industry was begun, with H.C. Clay of Rapid City as one of its most ardent supporters. Under Clay's guidance, a Rapid City local was formed and his newspaper, the Marquette Reporter, became the movement's official organ.¹⁸ Years later Clay recalled a Patron-sponsored farmers' picnic held at Rapid City in the 1890s, which was "attended by farmers from all over the province":

There must have been 2,000 people or more there, and that was a big crowd in the early days. [Charles] Braithwaite was a wonderfully magnetic platform speaker and to him was due the initial success of the movement. He got up in the wagon that day and talked for an hour and a half and held his audience

as close as they could get to the wheels, speaking about the grievances of farmers and what they could do by organization.¹⁹

Through stump meetings like this the message of agrarian reformism reached local farmers.

The Patrons, originally an educational association, soon became an agrarian pressure group and then a political movement. There is some evidence to suggest that the Patrons in Minnedosa riding had considered entering a candidate in the provincial election of 1892, at the behest of the Tory party.²⁰ This came to nothing and the Patrons had to wait until the Dominion election of 1896 before running a local candidate. One of the Patron candidates of 1896, Thomas Young, chose to contest the constituency of Marquette. Unfortunately for the Patrons, Young withdrew his name from the ballot within a month of beginning his campaign.²¹ His place was quickly filled by G.A.J.A. Marshall, better known as "Alphabetical Marshall", a vice-president of the movement and one of its few intellectuals.²² Despite the resiliency of local Patrons, the election proved a disaster. While Marshall received considerably more support from farmers than from townsfolk, he managed to garner only fourteen per cent of the total vote.²³ Obviously few farmers were ready to support a third party.

The Patron's demise after 1896 marked the end of early flirtations with agrarian reformism in the Minnedosan hinterland. General economic recovery had caused many farmers to forget their grievances and many others simply could not forsake their Ontario Toryism. Years would pass before they would again be asked to support a farmers' candidate, and when that time came less than half would refuse.

(iv)

In mid-April, 1898, seven Minnedosa men left behind their families, their friends, and their home-town, to seek gold in the Yukon. They were seven among thousands who trekked north that year, and of their exploits in the goldfields nothing is known. Two eventually returned to Minnedosa; of the other five no trace has been found. But their adventure is not important because of its success or failure; rather, it stands as an extreme expression of the great optimism which engulfed the town around 1900. The optimism was produced by a general upturn in the world economy, to which the gold of the Yukon contributed. But in country towns like Minnedosa, rising grain prices were far more intoxicating than discoveries of gold.

The competition for hinterland was nearly concluded in north-western Manitoba, and a new one emerged, based on the desire to modernize. The fruits of technological innovation had made modernization possible; now increased agricultural revenues made it practical. The fascination with railways was superseded by an enthusiasm for the latest urban appurtenances. With Winnipeg, Brandon, and Portage la Prairie as their models, small towns literally raced to see which would first obtain telephones and electrical lighting. In Minnedosa, the townspeople unquestionably saw Neepawa as their competitor. After 1900, editorials continually compared the civic development of the two centers. Crowding the pages of the Tribune were messages such as: "Even the ladies are complaining and want to know why the people of Minnedosa are not as energetic as those of Neepawa."²⁴ To secure a service which Neepawa did not have was to accomplish something great

indeed.

These civic improvements were subtle carriers of change, as the growth of the local communications network demonstrates. As early as 1894 the town council granted the Bell Telephone Company permission to erect poles on Minnedosa's streets.²⁵ For some unknown reason the first telephones were not installed until five years later, and then only through some makeshift arrangement.²⁶ Finally, in May of 1900, Bell began installation of poles and lines throughout the town.²⁷ The first to receive service were businessmen and professionals, but by 1908 one hundred and eleven Minnedosan homes were equipped with telephones.²⁸ In 1900 construction also began on long-distance connections with Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Rapid City, and other centers.²⁹ In sharp contrast to the situation in town, no one in the country around Minnedosa received telephones until 1908, when the provincial government purchased Bell's operation. Connections were then swiftly made, with the number of rural subscribers increasing from twenty-four to two hundred and two in only three years.³⁰ But this represented only about two or three per cent of the people in Minnedosa's hinterland,³¹ and it was to be decades before farmers received service comparable to that enjoyed by the townspeople.

A rescheduling of train service, seemingly so insignificant, also contributed to the town's growing monopoly on communications.³² In July of 1900 Minnedosa received daily train service, and with it, daily mail delivery. The rapid communication which was possible between residents of Minnedosa and the rest of the province was denied to all who lived on farms. And, if Minnedosans received daily mail, it is

reasonable to assume that many also received the Manitoba Free Press, at that time the most powerful newspaper in Western Canada.³³ Such reading was not likely to leave one's outlook unchanged.

The automobile had the same effect on town-country relations. By 1910 the horseless carriage was no longer an unusual sight on Minnedosan streets, for the Tribune casually records an incident in which an auto caused a run-away on Main Street.³⁴ A better example of the emerging clash of lifestyles would be hard to find! Of course not all townspeople had automobiles. At this early date they were the treasured (and cursed) possessions of a limited number of the town's business and professional men.³⁵ But by 1913 enough Minnedosans owned automobiles to warrant the formation of an Automobile Association, whose chief activity consisted of weekly excursions to surrounding towns, developing resort spots like Clear Lake, and even to far-away places like Melville, Saskatchewan, over one hundred and fifty miles to the west. Some of the richest farmers of the hinterland, especially in the Newdale district, also owned automobiles,³⁶ but in the main, farmers still maintained their teams of horses, using them for both fieldwork and transportation.³⁷

Yet another sign of the drift between town and country was the changing nature of entrepreneurship among Minnedosans. In the past, investments had typically been made in land adjacent to town or in branch-store operations. These investments were almost invariably made by a single person, or by two partners at most.³⁸ After the turn of the century the joint-stock company became the most frequently used vehicle for investment, and businessmen looked beyond the hinterland for

investment opportunities. One such case was the Minnedosa Ranching Company, Limited, organized in 1903.³⁹ Six entrepreneurs from Minnedosa pooled their capital and sank it into eighty-two hundred acres of ranching country near Medicine Hat. Even more typical, however, were joint ventures to provide the town with modern amenities, a clear indication that the demands of the townspeople were changing (or being changed) and that individual enterprise could no longer satisfy their needs.

The most important such activity during this period was the concerted effort made by concerned citizens to secure electrical power for the town. This began in 1902, although editorial calls for the service, and the by-laws necessary for its implementation, had come much earlier. At one of the best attended meetings in years,⁴⁰ it was decided that because of the cost involved in establishing such a service, a company would be organized and shares sold to finance construction of a dam on the Little Saskatchewan and an electrical generating plant. Enthusiasm was widespread at this point, for six hundred shares at ten dollars each were immediately applied for.⁴¹ Early in the next legislative session a bill to incorporate the company was introduced. It provided that the new corporation, to be known as The Minnedosa Power Company, would issue shares in the value of one hundred dollars each to a maximum of one hundred thousand dollars, and would have the power to build not only generating plants but electrical railways, telegraph and telephone lines, pulp mills, smelters, and so on.⁴² The Tribune later outlined the fate of the company:

About one and a half years ago a number of citizens felt that a town the size of Minnedosa should have some modern system of lighting. Besides the personal convenience, there was the

fact that very few towns of the size of Minnedosa were without some such system. . . . The town corporation was not in a position, owing to other engagements [i.e., the debt], to instal a plant. The citizens . . . did not generally realize the benefit and convenience of a general lighting system sufficiently to warrant formation of a local company.

For lack of support the company never got off the ground, and the town was forced to turn to outsiders to supply the capital for the plant. But to see only the failure of this first scheme is to miss its importance as an illustration of the feeling of inferiority which motivated its supporters. A desire to have the same conveniences as other towns, just as much as a desire to make money, fired the enterprise.

Eventually the town did get its electrical plant by contracting with a Winnipeg firm, and by 1906 almost every business and residence in Minnedosa was supplied with electrical lighting.⁴⁴ On Main Street four arc lights burned until two a.m. every morning, making the work of the night constable much easier. But in the country farmers and their wives still trimmed their coal-oil lamps and would continue to do so until the 1940s.⁴⁵ When hotplates, electrical toasters, stoves, and other amenities flooded the market in the 1920s, their only purchasers were in the town.

The web of electrical and telephone wires was only part of the changing townscape in this period. New buildings changed it even more. In 1904 the Tribune could report only that "no extraordinary rush of building takes place each year, but each year there is always a gratifying amount."⁴⁶ By May of 1912 Minnedosa was enjoying one of the most active building booms in years with the demand for housing being greater than ever.⁴⁷

A growing population with more money to spend was responsible for this building boom. In 1891 the town had contained six hundred and fourteen people; by 1906 this figure had more than doubled to almost thirteen hundred, and five years later it had again risen by two hundred. The prosperity, of course, came from the stability created by the booming wheat economy. Gradually the town lost its log and rough lumber structures, and more substantial homes arose in their place. Instead of crude exteriors, these were proudly finished with neat rows of clapboard or shiplap. And judging from the increased number of painters in town, far more houses than ever before must have been painted.⁴⁸

More distinctive by far were houses of brick or stone, and this undoubtedly conferred a special status upon their owners. Only wealthy individuals like W.J. Roche, local physician and Member of Parliament for Marquette, could afford to employ old-country stonemasons like T.D. Taylor.⁴⁹ But not even Dr. Roche's fine, two-storey, fieldstone home could match that of R.H. Myers, a local lawyer and politician, soon to be appointed a judge of the county court. "Tilson Place", as Myers's called it, or "The Castle", as it was known to lesser mortals, stood on Tilson Street, facing away from the town.⁵⁰ It was a two and a half storey home, built of buff brick on a stone foundation. On the south side, romanesque windows flanked a partial balcony, and decorative glass windows graced the verandah entrance with its triple columns. The distinguishing feature of the house, the one which earned it the name "Castle", was a tall, circular turret on the north-east corner, easily seen from the town center. Myers,

obviously proud of his eleven thousand dollar creation, installed an appropriate cornerstone for posterity.

In the country, too, some farmers erected stone monuments to their success. While none of these could match the baronial splendor of Myers's Castle, each was, in its own way, a conspicuous display of material progress. Generally these homes were built in those districts which had been settled first. Most were two-storey brick or fieldstone buildings, and many were undoubtedly the work of T.D. Taylor. With few exceptions, each was given a fitting name, like Mount Pleasant Farm, the home of William Grayson of Newdale,⁵¹ or Halse, the expansive farmstead of the Reverend Francis R. Hole and his sons.⁵²

The same wealth which permitted construction of these fine homes changed the face of Minnedosa's Main Street. The false-fronted, boom-time look was becoming a thing of the past as merchants and professionals celebrated their climbing profits by putting up new stores, offices, and halls. P.J. McDermott erected a solid brick store;⁵³ Sid Fairbairn raised a new brick block;⁵⁴ and Duncan McLennen and James F. Rea built a new hotel, the Tremont.⁵⁵ Typically, commercial buildings were now two or three storeys high, constructed of brick or fieldstone, and boasted ornate cornices, pediments, and decorative gables on the street side. Almost invariably, row upon row of romanescque windows girdled each building.

As all these changes in the townscape made clear, Minnedosa was no longer a town whose leading citizens thought like 'country-folk'. A new generation now occupied most of the chairs of the town council, a generation of men who took for granted the relationship between town

and country which their predecessors had fought so hard to secure and maintain. The prosperity of the countryside allowed these men to take it for granted, and their gaze became riveted upon developments in centers like Winnipeg, Brandon, and Portage la Prairie. Their emulation of these developments so changed Minnedosa and its citizens that when it became necessary to choose between the interests of the town and the interests of the farm, the majority of townspeople would follow their leaders.

(v)

On Tuesday, June 5, 1906, a mass meeting of farmers was held at the Orange Hall in Minnedosa. It was conducted under the auspices of the newly-formed Grain Growers' Grain Company, and the principal speaker was E.A. Partridge.⁵⁶ No record of Partridge's speech survives, but it is certain that he spoke of the need for co-operation and organization. That the farmers would have agreed with such a message is beyond doubt, for over the next few years Grain Growers' locals were formed at Minnedosa and in the smaller, outlying communities.⁵⁷ Minnedosa was not, however, the focus of protest. The real centers of farm agitation were the villages like Bethany, Franklin and Rookhurst.⁵⁸ From these settlements came the pleas for use of the co-operative principle in grain marketing, for lower telephone rates, for the enfranchisement of women, and for government control of line elevators.

The farm protest of all Western Canada achieved a common focus in the general election campaign of 1911. Reduction of the protective tariff became the chief plank in the Farmers' Platform of 1910,⁵⁹ and

the farmers' confidence was placed in Laurier and his Liberals. In the railway towns, like Minnedosa, tariff reductions were looked upon with trepidation,⁶⁰ and the election results revealed the divergence of interests.

The incumbent was the venerable Dr. William Roche of Minnedosa, who had held the seat for the Conservatives since 1896. His opponent was George A. Grierson, the respected former school principal and now insurance agent and accountant with a Minnedosa firm. Their campaigns were lackluster, with Roche riding on his reputation and Grierson capitalizing on Laurier's visit to town in July. Nonetheless, the voters considered the election to be one of great significance, since seventy-eight per cent of Minnedosa's electors turned out at the polls.⁶¹ In the rest of Marquette constituency the contest was taken just as seriously, with eighty-two per cent of those eligible voting. Minnedosans gave two-thirds of their votes to Roche, but in the other Marquette polls Roche obtained just over fifty per cent of the ballots cast. The editor of the Grain Growers' Guide explained the significance of this:

Marquette is another constituency in which reciprocity was endorsed by the rural vote and rejected by the majorities piled up against it by the towns. Outside of the eleven largest towns in the riding, the vote showed a majority of 307 for reciprocity. The combined vote of these towns, however, gave a majority for the anti-reciprocity candidate of 433.⁶²

In one terse paragraph, the editor laid bare the growing polarization of rural society.

(vi)

Before 1900 townspeople and countryfolk were distinguishable only by location and occupation. Similar concerns, both cultural and economic, had welded them into a community with a single identity. True, farmers had established a separate institutional base, but this proceeded from the perennial problem of distance and not from any sort of antipathy. The sameness of their institutions also shows this common identity. Still further, one can cite the development of insular farm districts as an expression of the inability to conquer distance. The townspeople, still deeply burdened with debt and feeling the effects of recurring depression, were as interested in the local agricultural economy as the farmers themselves, for therein lay their only protection against economic retrogression.

Around 1900 this began to change. Improved communications links with the rest of the province, and with Winnipeg in particular, informed the townspeople of the latest social trends and technological developments. At the same time a dramatic upturn in the world economy put cash and credit at everyone's disposal. Town leaders married the new-found wealth with technological innovation and provided Minnedosa with urban appurtenances. It would be decades before these same appurtenances reached the countryside.

Change swept the countryside as well, although not as quickly nor as completely. Rising grain prices caused agriculture to shift from labor to capital intensive around 1900, meaning that each farmer's stake in his farm operation and in international wheat agreements was greater than ever before. By 1902 western agriculture had begun to

assume a place of substantial importance in the national economy. Many local farmers came to believe, as did hundreds of their counterparts across the West, that despite their increasing contribution to national wealth, they were not sharing equally in the prosperity. In Manitoba, as in the other prairie provinces, this discontent found a common focus in the Grain Growers' Association. As the movement's journal, the Grain Growers' Guide, began to circulate after 1908, it became a unifying force as it showed local farmers that their disquietude was shared by many others.

The Dominion election of 1911 provided farmers and townsmen alike with a forum in which to express their convictions about the state of the nation. A majority of local farmers, perceiving the Liberal plank of reciprocity as a kind of panacea for their problems, threw their support behind the free-traders. The townsmen, content with the economic strides of the past decade and apprehensive about reciprocity's effect on their rail traffic, voted for the Tories. The divergence of interests was manifest.

CHAPTER 6

CENTER AND PERIPHERY

1912 - 1922

(i)

Rural society had reached the threshold of the great transformation. In the next decade prosperous Minnedosans continued to modernize their town in the image of Winnipeg, until by the early 1920s only vestiges of frontier Minnedosa remained. In the countryside, where economic conditions were less propitious, a majority of farmers became active in the Grain Growers' movement. With the Guide as their beacon, they came to understand the inequity of the National Policy, the merits of collective endeavor, and finally the necessity of political action. At the same time both town and country were caught up in a wave of fundamental social reform. Women cast off their Victorian passivity in favor of a more active social role, and parents adopted a very different attitude toward their children. By 1922 the world in which Minnedosans lived had been transformed physically, socially, and ideologically.

(ii)

Minnedosa continued to prosper after 1911. Between 1912 and 1914 land sales and building starts rose as never before.¹ Property assessment values climbed from \$607,035 in 1910 to \$838,585 by 1912, and then to \$1,128,440 in 1914.² A flood of applications to loan the

town eight thousand dollars in 1914 showed that its credit rating was good.³ Between 1911 and 1916 local postal money order receipts almost doubled.⁴ The population grew from 1,483 in 1911 to 1,833 by 1916, an increase of nearly twenty-five per cent.⁵ In short, every indicator of economic activity pointed to the continuing affluence of the townspeople.

The general restriction of credit in 1913, which was accompanied by a drop in the price of wheat, seems to have had little impact upon Minnedosa. Local money order receipts dropped off slightly,⁶ but the number of business firms remained stable. Business picked up after the 1915 bumper wheat harvest, but few businessmen were investing in new firms. By 1919 Minnedosa was enjoying the brief post-war speculative boom that encouraged both consumer spending and business expansion.

Most Minnedosa merchants fared well in such an economic climate. Owners of small businesses, like butcher and furniture salesman Joseph Burgess, watched as their business assets doubled between 1911 and 1914 to reach a level of perhaps five or ten thousand dollars.⁷ It seems that during the war years they earned sufficient profits to remain stable, but not enough to encourage expansion. Those firms that traditionally earned the largest profits⁸ now did even better. A lumberyard owner like W.G. Brown, or a druggist like R.T. Butchart, was able to increase his business worth by about one thousand dollars each year despite general economic fluctuations.⁹ But among Minnedosa businessmen, one stood head and shoulders above the rest by 1916. This was none other than P.J. McDermott, who began his career thirty years before in a tent at Odanah. He had gone from tent merchant to owner of three

general stores and amassed a business fortune of between two hundred thousand and three hundred thousand dollars, and all this before income tax was introduced!

More indicative of the transformation overtaking Minnedosa were the new types of businesses that opened their doors. Most noticeable were the automobile dealerships, which usually began as a sideline of the local farm implements dealer. The first, that of Duke and McDonald, commenced operations in 1910.¹⁰ Service garages and tire repair shops soon followed, providing work for those few special individuals who understood the mysteries of the internal combustion engine. At the same time the number of local carriage-makers declined.¹¹ In the construction business, local carpenters and stonemasons had to share their clients with a cement contractor, John Zetterlund, who moved to town in 1905.¹² And, as ever more homes and offices were modernized, work was provided for a plumber and an electrician.

Prosperity and technology combined to change the townscape. A growing population had pushed the residential areas north and south by 1916.¹³ North of the tracks and the river, houses clustered about the North School, which had been built in 1909-10 to accommodate the collegiate students and some primary grades. These homes, like the majority of buildings in town, were usually of frame construction. On the south side of the river, nestled around Myer's Castle, a fine group of stone houses had been erected, again near a school located at the corner of Saskatchewan and Main. In this part of town, which had always been referred to as the 'upper town', lived most of Minnedosa's professionals and wealthy businessmen.

Main Street was still the town's thoroughfare, and there the signs of change were most visible. The old plank sidewalks which had bothered David Cannon for years had been replaced by ones of cement, no doubt the work of John Zetterlund.¹⁴ In 1917 the town council obtained permission from the provincial government to issue debentures for the hard-surfacing of a street, probably Main.¹⁵ During the same year a new concrete bridge was built over the river.¹⁶ Four years later traffic lights were installed.¹⁷

New buildings, especially public ones, gave the town a modern appearance as well. In 1909 a three-storey frame hospital, complete with steam heat and electricity,¹⁸ was opened in the west end of town where the risk of fire was considerably less. In the next year a massive red-brick courthouse was built to house the offices of the newly-formed Northern Judicial District.¹⁹ Three years later a new post office was constructed, due mainly to the efforts of Dr. William Roche, local Member of Parliament and then Minister of the Interior in Borden's cabinet.²⁰ During the same year an armory was built by the Department of Militia on a lot donated by the town.²¹ Huddled among these brick giants was another recent addition to the town, one whose unpretentious appearance belied its importance. This was the Lyric Theatre, where for twenty-five cents young and old could watch rising filmstars like Charlie Chaplin and Tom Mix, and catch a glimpse, however unreal, of the world beyond their town.

The modernity of the town could just as easily be defined in terms of what it had lost. On a March night in 1909, fire consumed the old Armitage mills.²² One year later the original Canadian Pacific

stationhouse burned to the ground,²³ and was replaced by a new structure. By 1916 the commodious Tremont Hotel, only eleven years old, stood empty.²⁴ Four years later the Pearson elevator, which had serviced local farmers since around 1890, was razed.²⁵

The old Minnedosa was giving way to a thoroughly modern town, and civic leaders threw all their support behind new developments. The local Board of Trade, now reorganized and more active than ever, marshalled public support for a concrete dam and hydro-electric generating plant to supply the growing needs of the townspeople. The dam created a mile-long lake just north-east of town and the Board of Trade began advertising Minnedosa as a resort spot.²⁶ There was also talk of stocking the lake with fish, and the Board of Trade organized its own Parks Committee to pressure the town council for the establishment of public parks in town. The council liked the proposal and began a tree-planting and general beautification scheme as well.

Civic leaders made a serious effort to induce new industries to locate at Minnedosa. Offers of free lots and tax exemptions were held out to a cardboard box manufacturer, an oatmeal milling company, a sugar-beet processor, and a soft-drink bottler, but to no avail. Then, in 1920, the British American Oil Company announced its intention to build a bulk oil distributing plant at Minnedosa.²⁷ The company immediately began negotiations with the town council. Within two years a warehouse and oil storage tanks were constructed on a group of lots donated by the town. With this distributing station Minnedosa's industrial expansion, if it can be called that, seems to have come to an end, making civic leaders more aware than ever of the limits to growth in a

country town.

These developments in commercial services, public utilities, and recreation determined the lifestyle and activities of Minnedosans for years to come. Now, for the first time, Minnedosa could justly boast that the differences between its amenities and those of Winnipeg were ones of degree, not kind. And, if prosperity made such modernization possible, dynamic civic leaders ensured that it would take place. As successful businessmen, they envisioned important new sources of revenue in industry and tourism. They fully realized the power of the corporation, its importance to the national economy, and its potential contribution to the economic progress of a small town. Likewise, they understood that they were dealing with an increasingly mobile population, one which might well patronize their hotels and shops if offered the right attractions. In sum, their ethic of civic development placed them squarely in the mainstream of Canadian commercial thought.

(iii)

Economic conditions in the countryside were marked by more variation. During the 1913-14 recession little economic growth seems to have occurred. In Minnedosa's hinterland, the typical farmer brought only an additional twenty-six acres under the plough between 1910 and 1914, to raise the average number of cultivated acres per farm to just over one hundred.²⁸ Significantly, two-thirds of this increase took place before 1913. The number of horses per farm rose by less than ten per cent, suggesting an inability to enlarge cultivated acreages

and thereby secure limited economies of scale. Little diversification was taking place; the number of cattle and sheep per farm actually declined between 1910 and 1914, while the number of hogs per farm increased marginally. The slow pace of economic growth can probably be seen best in the taxable assessment of the average farmer, which increased by slightly more than one per cent in the four-year period to about eighteen hundred dollars. It seems likely that whatever growth did occur was due primarily to the cash reserves which had been built up during the preceding decade.

The persistence of the service center hierarchy of 1907 showed the extent to which local agriculture remained in its pioneer phase. Before the Great War the horse was still widely used, and its gait determined the marketing and trading patterns of local farmers. Thus while Minnedosa and Neepawa continued to dominate their respective trade areas, smaller centers like Newdale, Shoal Lake, Clanwilliam and Basswood still secured enough business to remain stable communities.²⁹

Local farmers did not fail to notice the contrast between their own economic condition and that of the townspeople. Their reaction was defensive. They equated the town with the city, with immorality, congestion, and extravagance. As one speaker at a Franklin Grain Growers' banquet remarked: "By its quiet simple life the farm was more favorable for the development of character than the town or city, with their incessant noise and extravagant habits."³⁰ Moreover, it was in the countryside that true democracy dwelled. The principles of popular government - direct taxation, direct legislation, and the

enfranchisement of women - could only be found in Grain Growers' locals and on municipal councils.³¹

Each year more hinterland farmers joined the Grain Growers' movement and urged their neighbors to do the same. They formed small locals, usually of fifteen to thirty members, and met regularly at a point of convenience like a schoolhouse or a village hall. There they discussed the new ideas set out in the Guide and decided on ways to improve their economic position. The Moore Park local, for example, attempted in 1913 to obtain a loading platform for the next crop year which would enable members to by-pass the elevator and save handling charges.³² Since Dominion legislation had been in existence since 1900 which provided for the construction of such a platform wherever requested by farmers, the local probably obtained its platform. By October of 1914 the larger Minto local had established a consumers' co-operative which purchased goods in bulk, thereby reducing the per unit cost. The seventy-one members ordered five boxcars of coal and another of apples, and expected to handle flour and feed shortly.³³ Such co-operatives naturally irked town merchants and millers whose profits depended on continued patronage by local farmers. It seems, however, that few co-operatives were set up, for although the assiduous Tribune editor often noted the presence of travelling pedlars, he never mentioned farmers' co-operatives.

Attracting much more attention from David Cannon were the mail order houses and the business they received from local farmers. Farm residents had long dealt with Winnipeg-based mail order houses through the local railway express office.³⁴ After 1914, however, the issue

became more divisive as the Dominion government introduced a parcel post system³⁵ and local merchants were able to gauge the loss of local revenue through the records of postal money order receipts published annually by the Postmaster-General. When it was learned that \$103,550 worth of money orders had been sold at Minnedosa in 1913, Cannon remarked:

But even though an allowance of fifty per cent were made, the sum is still large enough to have a very perceptible influence on the prosperity of Minnedosa and surrounding country.³⁶

If Minnedosa merchants had not perceived the threat to their businesses implicit in the parcel post system, Cannon certainly made it plain enough. Local farmers, for their part, felt little sympathy for the merchant. "I believe," wrote one member of the Marquette District Grain Growers' Association to the Guide,

that the retail merchant is quite able to hold his own against mail order competition, as evidence, note him spinning around in his auto, looking, and no doubt feeling, quite satisfied with himself.³⁷

Evidently farmers viewed the mail order house as they did the cooperative - as another means, albeit more convenient, of gaining some control over local prices.

Local adoption of these commercial strategies was an important result of the Guide's continuing educational work. Yet it was clear that such measures did not strike at the root of the matter. After 1911 an increasing number of local farmers realized that their economic well-being depended principally on Canada's international trade relations. Unlike local merchants, they had reasonably well-organized lobby working

in their interests, and by 1915 virtually every hinterland village had given its name to a local of the Grain Growers' Association.³⁸

After 1915 the farmers' stake in international trade arrangements was even greater. Across the West record crop yields were recorded. In Marquette, wheat and barley yields reached thirty bushels to the acre, and oats hit forty-five.³⁹ Grain prices moved steadily upward in response to wartime demands. By April of 1917 the price of wheat was over three dollars per bushel.⁴⁰ Local farmers reacted by improving existing acreages instead of buying more land at high prices like most Western farmers.⁴¹ This was probably due to a shortage of available land rather than to uncommonly sound business planning. They also invested large sums of their own and borrowed capital in machinery and new buildings. Between 1911 and 1921 the value of buildings on an average Marquette farm more than doubled, while machinery values tripled.⁴² This mechanization was costly due to wartime inflation, and local farmers protested by endorsing the New Farmers' Platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, which called for substantial tariff reductions on farm necessities.⁴³

By 1915-16, then, the farmers of Minnedosa's hinterland were a cohesive and distinctive group. They understood their unenviable position in the national economy; that is, that they sold their wheat in a buyers' market and yet were obliged to purchase the staples of life in a sellers' market. Furthermore, they held in common the conviction that as individuals they were powerless to affect national economic policies, and that only through collective appeal to government could they secure redress. Still further, by their endorsement of the 1916

Farmers' Platform local farmers expressed their solidarity with the Canadian Council of Agriculture, which had represented Canadian farm interests since 1909. In short, the community to which these farmers now belonged was at once regional and agrarian, not local.⁴⁴

(iv)

The breakdown of Victorian attitudes toward women and children began in earnest around 1910. As in the case of the farmers' movement, there was nothing localized about this development.

In rural Manitoba, women's groups had traditionally been few in number and almost invariably associated with the church. Until the 1890s, Ladies' Aid auxiliaries and a Missionary Society were the sole vehicles of expression for Minnedosan women. In 1890-91 a local of the Women's Christian Temperance Union was formed in town, but its activities went hand in hand with those of the church. The first sign of a new secular role for women surfaced in 1892, when they were permitted to vote in civic elections for the first time.⁴⁵ Over the next decade women took a much more active role in sports, in the annual fair and exhibition, and in the movement to obtain better medical facilities for Minnedosa. By 1905 their new social role had gained considerable acceptance among the men of the town. John Bremner, editor of the Minnedosa Mercury, captured the prevailing sentiment in an editorial in which he discussed the relationship of women to "their lords, the men."⁴⁶ After penning that remark with deliberate chauvinism, Bremner quickly added that "I guess they [women] wont [sic] admit the lordship business: that is getting to be a thing of the past even among Presbyterians."⁴⁷

Minnedosan women were in the forefront of the women's movement in Manitoba. In 1910 Minnedosa became the eighth community in the province to charter a Home Economics Society.⁴⁸ Ironically, the organizational meeting was held under the auspices of the local Agricultural Society.⁴⁹ These Home Economics Societies, later known as Women's Institutes, were sponsored by the Manitoba Agricultural College as part of its extension work in rural Manitoba, beginning early in 1910. Under the motto, "For Home and Country", they were active in arranging short courses in homemaking, nutrition and sewing, in raising funds for a rest room for the convenience of farm women, in organizing children's activities, in aiding the local hospital, and in any work which promoted the welfare of the community.⁵⁰

Outside of Minnedosa's environs the status transformation of women took place through another channel, the Grain Growers' movement. As early as 1910 John Allan, reeve of Odanah municipality and a local agrarian leader, had "urged women to organize for a [sic] betterment of their condition."⁵¹ Female suffrage, as noted earlier, was from the first perceived as a logical extension of the principle of popular government, something each Grain Grower held dear. In 1913 a member of the Basswood local went as far as to suggest that Grain Growers' meetings should become "family gatherings, not alone gatherings of the heads of families to buy cars of flour or apples, but the assembly of fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters."⁵² This notion was finding favor in locals across the province, and in the same year the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association revised its constitution to permit members' wives and daughters to become associate members without

fee.⁵³ The response from farm women was enthusiastic, for in 1916 they urged the Association's executive to establish separate women's sections. Some of these women were from Minnedosa's hinterland, as Mrs. F. Williamson of Strathclair was made director of the Women's Grain Growers' Association of Marquette District in the same year.⁵⁴ Although separate women's sections were not officially recognized until 1918, their work had begun years earlier.

The shift in attitudes toward children was similarly a local response to external developments. The traditional view may be best understood through a consideration of parental attitudes toward education. In spite of the fact that schools were among the first institutions to be established in rural society, by the turn of the century neither townspeople nor farmers seem to have regarded the educational process with much enthusiasm.

In the country economic stringency would seem to have been the chief reason for the traditional attitude. Farmers equated education with the literacy of their children, and nothing more. It served a strictly utilitarian purpose, and was not meant to enrich the pupil intellectually. As a school inspector observed in 1900:

In many rural communities there is an impression that adequate results are not obtained from the money spent on our schools. The Programme of Studies, it is claimed, is overloaded with such subjects as botany, drawing, music, etc. These subjects are considered 'frills' that distract the attention of the teachers and the pupils from the real school issues, the 'three R's'.⁵⁵

Farm parents saw no need for their children to acquire any but the most rudimentary skills, suggesting that few expected their children to be

anything more than farmers like themselves. Moreover, the school inspectors' reports are riddled with comments about the poor attendance of farm children during the autumn.⁵⁶ Obviously the contribution of farm children to the family economy had not lessened since the Little Saskatchewan was first settled.

Minnedosan attitudes are more elusive. School attendance figures, while much better than in the country, suggest only the obvious - that the distance to school was short and that there was less need for children's labor in the town. From contemporary events, however, one gets the impression of a pervasive complacency. For example, in 1906 Inspector A.B. Fallis commented that "practically no attention is given to the physical training of the children, either in the school room or the playground. Very few of the children seem to know how to play."⁵⁷ Despite this observation, which was unquestionably read by or conveyed to the local school board, the attitude was still prevalent in 1908. A new school was being built and Mercury editor John Bremner found it necessary to remind citizens that

One thing should have more attention than was given in building the old school - there should be a large playground. It is not right that the few minutes set apart for recreation at recess and noon must be spent indoors or standing around in the small areas presently at the pupils' disposal.⁵⁸

The incident was not an isolated one. In 1907 the Presbyterian minister, Reverend J.S. Watson, gave a public address on the question of parental responsibility for the moral training of their children. The Mercury paraphrased his speech:

Mr. Watson spoke strongly on the matter of home training to which the Sunday School should be of secondary importance.

Parents are inclined to cast the care and responsibility for⁵⁹ the moral training of their children upon the Sunday School.

One may suggest, with reserve, that this complacency stemmed from two fundamental facts of life in this period. The first was the new prosperity of Minnedosa, which engaged the interest of the townsfolk to the detriment of the moral training of their children. The other was the generally quiet state of world affairs, now that the Boer War was over and no new threat to King and country was readily apparent from the vantage point of Minnedosa. The plausibility of this explanation is suggested by the contrast between contemporary attitudes and those after 1910.

The first indication that a new attitude had seeped into the Minnedosa district is contained in a school inspector's report of 1910. School 'field days', the inspector observed with obvious satisfaction, had become very popular.⁶⁰ Under the guidance of the school inspector and local teachers, district track and field competitions were held, and for the first time an award, the Coldwell Shield, was given for individual prowess in sports. At the same time, moral training was introduced into the schools.⁶¹ This was not religious training as such, but rather instruction in the civic duties of every citizen. A year later a group of concerned Minnedosans decided to organize a Boy Scout troop in town.⁶² It was no accident that these developments took place almost simultaneously. They were an integral part of a general movement throughout the British Empire to raise a generation of strong moral conviction and military preparedness.⁶³ By way of coincidence, children were given greater attention and the opportunity to

express their individuality as never before.

Field days would not have been as successful without the participation of country schools, but farm parents still seemed to be more concerned with the cost of education. The idea of consolidating schools to reduce costs and to provide better education for the children had been broached by the school inspector in the early 1900s, but as late as 1908 A.B. Fallis reported that "there seems to be a strong prejudice against making the experiment."⁶⁴ Then, in a quick about-face, country school boards began to hold meetings to consider the advisability of consolidation. In 1911, it seems, the first consolidation was accomplished,⁶⁵ and after this the idea swept the countryside. The effect of this development went beyond the saving of money, which was probably the original goal. Just as the Grain Growers' locals were teaching the farmers about their position in the larger world, so the consolidated school now began to free their children from provincialism.

Related to the physiocratic idealism of the farmers, and to their sense of economy, was the question of keeping the children interested in farming. This was a common concern among farmers across Canada at this time,⁶⁶ and it appears that local farmers attempted to arrest the movement of their children to the city by making country life more attractive to them. The most obvious attempt was the initiation of Boys' and Girls' Clubs such as the one that had been formed at Minnedosa in 1915.⁶⁷ By 1916 over fifty per cent of the area's school districts had such clubs.⁶⁸ They were started, like the Women's Institutes, as an extension activity of the Manitoba Agricultural

College.⁶⁹ The unit of organization was the school inspectoral division and the inspector was accepted as the leader in his division. Typical activities included calf- and pig-raising, seed grain growing, weed eradication, sewing, cooking, wood-working, and essay writing. The talents of the children were tested each year at local fairs, and then at a district fair held at Minnedosa. The Minnedosa fair was considered "one of the best in the province."⁷⁰

Greater involvement in the lives of their children eventually caused parents to reform the school system without regard to ulterior motives. One sign of the new interest, according to A.B. Fallis, was "the formation of Municipal Trustees' Associations at Neepawa, Minnedosa, and Basswood."⁷¹ The activities of these organizations centered around the provision of better school equipment, medical inspection of schools, and the supply of hot lunches for the children.⁷² In 1920 the Association arranged for the employment of two public health nurses, one of whom served Minnedosa and the municipalities of Minto and Odanah, while the other worked at Neepawa and in Langford municipality.⁷³

By 1921 the Minnedosa Women's Institute was giving its attention to the establishment of a child welfare station in town. One member expressed the motives behind this move:

When we look about us at the adult population and see . . . people suffering physically, mentally and morally from defects which might have been corrected in childhood, it makes one sad; but it also makes us more than ever determined that if possible we will put our children on the right footing.⁷⁴

In the spring of 1922 the station was opened. This development, like

the Trustees' Associations, was clearly part of what Neil Sutherland has called the "wider movement to improve the conditions of Canadian childhood."⁷⁵

The processes by which women and children had achieved a new status within the town and country communities were essentially similar. Women had been granted more latitude, and children given more direction, in order that the particular interests of the society could be better served. The vehicles of self-realization, once set in motion, proceeded of their own momentum.⁷⁶

(v)

When Great Britain declared war against Germany in August of 1914, rural society was permeated by a sense of crisis that reached back and tugged at its Anglo-Saxon traditions. For over four years an intense war fervor ruled social relations, and nearly all discord was subordinated to a deep feeling of responsibility to the boys overseas. The voice of reform was still heard, but only as a whisper amid the din of patriotism.

Minnedosans quickly formed a branch of the Red Cross.⁷⁷ Its members, most of whom were women, raised money by holding socials and dances, and an average of one hundred dollars was sent to Winnipeg each month in the first year and a half of war.⁷⁸ This amount increased as the war continued. The Red Cross volunteers also met regularly to prepare packages of bandages, blankets, clothes, and even helmets for shipment overseas. A Belgian Relief Fund Committee was organized a few weeks later,⁷⁹ and in late 1915 a local of the Patriotic Fund was

formed.⁸⁰ Still later, concerned citizens subscribed money to the Victory Loans campaign, and a local committee was set up to co-ordinate the handling of subscriptions. By 1919 Minnedosans and hinterland residents had subscribed \$119,000.⁸¹

Those farmers nearest Minnedosa donated directly to the town organizations, but it was more common for farmers to contribute through their Grain Growers' local.⁸² In 1915 the Marquette District Grain Growers Association elected an executive committee to circulate a pledge among all local members which obligated them to give the proceeds from the sale of one acre of wheat to the provincial Grain Growers' Association War Relief Fund.⁸³

The sense of social responsibility went farther than rolling bandages and raising money. It extended to the question of what to do with those immigrants who had recently arrived from countries with which Canada was now at war. When reports reached town in 1914 that some local Austrians were openly pro-German, the Tribune editor adopted a conciliatory attitude and wrote that "it is hoped that good common sense will prevail."⁸⁴ The war would not, after all, be a protracted conflict. But as the months passed and the casualties mounted, Cannon's attitude shifted from mild to harsh. He called for the suppression of all pro-German newspapers,⁸⁵ and then for an official policy of restrictive immigration.⁸⁶ This nativist attitude was widely shared, for in the spring of 1919 a local service club, whose membership included both townsfolk and farmers, showed that wartime intolerance was far from extinguished. The issue was a Minnedosa coal contract, awarded

by one Thomas Harland of Winnipeg to a local named Enoch Stefaniuk. Stefaniuk, as it turned out, had been given the contract in preference to Harland's former agent, Frank Spackman, an Englishman and a Boer War veteran. The club vigorously protested against the hiring of any 'alien enemies' when a loyal British subject was qualified and available.⁸⁷

The fervor of wartime and the election of a reform-minded government prompted a resurgence of provincial demands for prohibition legislation. Premier Norris proved obliging, and March 13th was set as the date for a referendum on the question. This was a reform closely associated with the rise of the women's movement, but unfortunately Manitoban women were not permitted to vote on the issue. The province's temperance forces launched an aggressive campaign, and were met by a weak opposition.⁸⁸ Few meetings were held at Minnedosa, and none caused much stir, but this is hardly surprising since the area had been dry by local option since 1914.⁸⁹ Indeed, so much of a foregone conclusion was the vote at Minnedosa that a low sixty per cent of the voters turned out at the polls. Three-quarters of them voted to keep the area dry.⁹⁰

The Protestant churches, which had thrown all their support behind the prohibition movement, were at the same time attempting to effect a denominational union. Talks had begun as early as 1902, but despite considerable support for the idea, especially in Western Canada, little progress was made. The stumbling block was the Presbyterian Church, which was divided internally. In the main, Western congregations favored union because of the expense of supporting several Protestant churches in each town. Eastern Presbyterians could afford to take a

more doctrinaire view. In the 1915 vote on union, the Minnedosa Presbyters voted sixteen to one in favor of uniting.⁹¹ When the national count failed to produce an overwhelming consensus, the Minnedosan Presbyters sent a missive to the 1916 General Assembly which conveyed their "utter disappointment at any possibility of the postponement of church union."⁹² Although the General Assembly failed to settle the question for another nine years, the Protestant congregations of Minnedosa continued to hold union services, as did many country congregations.

The question of union was not limited to churches during the war years. At Ottawa, the Conservatives decided that union government was a realistic way to stave off national disunity over the implementation of compulsory military service, which Prime Minister Borden felt had become impossible to avoid. Borden succeeded in forming a union cabinet by October of 1917, and a general election was called for December 17th. Representing agricultural interests in the new cabinet was Thomas A. Crerar, a Winnipeg Liberal who was president of the United Grain Growers' Grain Company. After considering possible constituencies, Crerar settled on Marquette.⁹³ Immediately he ran into opposition from local Grain Growers who had already chosen R.H. Dennison of Newdale to contest the forthcoming election. The organized farmers did not like having Crerar foisted upon them, but after protracted discussion Dennison agreed to withdraw from the campaign and Crerar was endorsed as the farmers' candidate. He was not to win the riding by acclamation, however, as a Laurier Liberal, F.C. Hamilton, was nominated to run against him.

It was really no contest. Eighty-nine per cent of the electorate went to the polls on December 17th and chose Crerar as their representative by over 7,500 votes.⁹⁴ In Minnedosa, Crerar received ninety-two per cent of the votes cast; elsewhere in the riding he obtained eighty-eight per cent.⁹⁵ Townsfolk and farmers were clearly projecting their local belief in wartime solidarity onto the national stage.⁹⁶

Conscription cost local people the labor, if not the lives, of their sons, and by August of 1918 the manpower shortage on district farms was serious enough that it appeared the farmers would have difficulty taking off their crops before snowfall. To assist them, a group of prominent Minnedosans, led by Mayor W.G. Brown, formed a Harvest Club.⁹⁷ The purpose of the organization was to form stooking parties to expedite the harvest, and the town council paid a wage of thirty cents per hour to all who volunteered. By the end of August such parties regularly took to the neighboring fields.

The war ended in November, but the fervor persisted. The energies that had sustained Minnedosa and area through the crisis were channelled into the Minnedosa District Community Club, formed in February of 1919.⁹⁸ Ostensibly led by some prominent townsmen and farmers, but dominated by their wives, the Club was set up to "support any movement for the support and improvement of community, health, business, morals, and recreation."⁹⁹ It was based at Minnedosa, and worked in conjunction with virtually every town organization as well as district agricultural societies, Grain Growers' locals, and municipal councils.

As a pluralist organization, the Club's activities were as

broad in practice as they were in conception, and it attempted to divert the war fervor into reform efforts. In just a few months Community Club members tried to deal with the questions of high freight rates, hiring alien laborers, the evils of track betting, the necessity of better sanitation at Minnedosa, and the provision of more recreational facilities for young people. But as the year drew to a close, participation in the Club slackened. At a poorly-attended annual meeting in November, 1919, one member was bold enough to suggest that the Club would probably be more successful if it concentrated its efforts.¹⁰⁰ Membership dropped rapidly and by December it seemed that the Club might become defunct. Weakened by the decline of the patriotic spirit which had spawned it, the Community Club lasted only long enough to sponsor a town library and a war memorial.

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The organized farmers were the only reform group in rural society to emerge from the war disappointed and disillusioned. Their sole provincial triumph had been the Initiative and Referendum Act of 1916, a legislative embodiment of popular government, but this was thrown out by the courts as unconstitutional. At the Dominion level their Farmers' Platform of 1916 had gone unheeded by those in power, and when it was reissued in 1918 with the name of "New National Policy" it still elicited no sympathy for Ottawa Tories. The farmers' suspicions about the futility of pressuring the government for reform were confirmed in 1919 when the Minister of Finance announced only modest tariff reductions in the new budget. This small concession to Western

economic interests fell short of the farmers' expectations, and prompted T.A. Crerar to resign his cabinet post, a move that Marquette Grain Growers supported completely.¹⁰¹ At the same time they called on all Western farmers to take independent political action to meet their objectives.

Premier Norris gave the farmers an opportunity to try their hand at politics in the summer of 1920. Two candidates contested the riding of Minnedosa. The Liberals put forward George Grierson, a Minnedosa insurance agent who had helped prepare Marquette for Crerar in 1917. The independent farmers' candidate was W.J. Beilby, an elderly farmer from the municipality of Minto. After a campaign that excited no one, just over half of the eligible voters went to the polls, the lowest turnout in many years. Grierson won, but only by a margin of about ten per cent,¹⁰² hardly a landslide victory. In Minnedosa he received just over fifty-six per cent of the vote; in all other polls he obtained almost the same percentage. As was the case in much of the province, voters were unsure of just what they were voting for.

The speculative boom that followed the war had meanwhile given way to depression. Farmers with large wheat acreages were particularly vulnerable. Besides the change in world demand for wheat, there was talk of ending the Canadian Wheat Board, which had guaranteed farmers a minimum price for their 1919 crop. To make matters worse, most farmers were still burdened with the debts incurred during the war. One sign of the growing tension was the eruption of a town-country debate over the issue of mail order buying. Column after column of the "Letters to the Editor" section of the Tribune was filled with acrimonious comment.

Merchants had always seen the question as one of loyalty to the town. They argued that they were good enough to give credit to the farmers when it was required, and that farmers should therefore patronize local businesses when times were good.¹⁰³ They stressed that shopping in Minnedosa was more convenient, for women were able to obtain their purchases without delay.¹⁰⁴ It eliminated the need to make several trips to town - one to post the mail order, another to pick up the parcel some time later, and perhaps even another to return substituted or unusable goods. Furthermore, shopping in town meant that the goods could be examined on the spot and women ran no risk of being dissatisfied with their purchases, and even if they were dissatisfied they could always return them for a refund or exchange without inconvenience. Does not the farm woman realize, asked one merchant,

that every dollar she sends to the mail order house helps to build up and make our large cities what they are, instead of helping to build up her small town and improve the roads and community in which she lives? Fifteen years ago in Minnedosa there were seven general stores; today there are two. What is the reason for it? - people sending their money to the mail order houses.¹⁰⁵

Of course farm women had their own reasons for patronizing the mail order houses. They claimed that shopping in town was the epitome of inconvenience, especially for mothers with young children. "There is nothing attractive", wrote one farmer's wife,

in driving into town and getting out of the cutter in front of a store all muffled in coats and shawls that you have no place to leave except in the cutter where they are as cold as ice when you put them on to go home at night. Little attraction in thawing out before a register in a crowded store and [in] the lack of toilet accommodations for women provided in the average town, of waiting around the stores or streets until father's business is finished.¹⁰⁶

Then there was the cost. To order a hundredweight of freight from Winnipeg cost the purchaser fifty-five cents, but to remain in town all day took at least a dime each for a meal and another thirty-five cents for stabling the horses. Such small economies became increasingly important to local farm families as the depression worsened.

In the Dominion election of 1921 Marquette farmers again fielded a candidate. He was T.A. Crerar, now leader of the National Progressive Party, the farmers' party. Crerar appealed to the voters as a candidate independent of the nation's plutocrats, in favor of more equitable taxation, and utterly opposed to any measure of protection.¹⁰⁷ The Conservative hopeful was Brigadier-General Hugh M. Dyer, Minnedosa war hero and district farmer. Despite Dyer's distinguished military record, he maintained a low profile throughout the contest. Apart from a few public appearances, his campaign consisted solely of newspaper advertisements - obviously prepared by the national party - which exalted the virtues of Arthur Meighen and made no mention of Dyer himself.¹⁰⁸ The Liberal candidate was Lewis St. George Stubbs, a flamboyant Birtle lawyer who had two years earlier offered his services to the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike. He clearly saw Crerar as his only competition, and repeatedly suggested that while he was in fundamental agreement with everything Crerar stood for, he could not accept the notion of 'class' that tainted the Progressives.¹⁰⁹

Three-quarters of the eligible voters turned out on this election day. Crerar became Marquette's representative by a margin of two-to-one over his nearest rival, H.M. Dyer.¹¹⁰ Stubbs finished a miserable third in all but one poll, and obtained less than four per

cent of the popular vote. The result was not surprising, since Marquette was very much an agricultural riding. But it is significant that in Minnedosa Crerar received only forty-one per cent of the vote, while in the other polls he received nearly seventy per cent. The country results take on even greater importance in view of the fact that Crerar spent little time in the riding because of his duties as national leader.¹¹¹ The educational work of the Guide had been translated into votes.

The provincial election of the following summer gave Manitobans another opportunity to air their convictions. For two years Premier Norris had attempted to rule with a minority government, and in the spring of 1922 a non-confidence vote brought down his administration. An election was called for July 18th. The United Farmers of Manitoba, as the Grain Growers were now called, began to canvass the Minnedosa constituency for election funds in early May.¹¹² Soon after they nominated as their candidate Neil Cameron, the son of one of the earliest settlers of the Little Saskatchewan. The government candidate was Arthur W. Shaw, a Minnedosa automobile and farm implements dealer, and a distinctly bad choice, considering all that his business represented to debt-ridden local farmers. The campaign that followed was subdued, with both candidates pledging to work for economical government. The vote could not have been more decisive. Cameron won every country poll, while Shaw won every Minnedosa poll.¹¹³ Just over seventy-one per cent of the farmers voted for Cameron and exactly the same percentage of the townspeople voted for Shaw. Rural society was politically balkanized.

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The years from 1912 to 1922 witnessed the transition from traditional to modern rural society. Its principal characteristic was the replacement of local autonomy by communion with the larger society. Efficient communication was the driving force behind the transition.

At the local level a reordering of social relationships was the most graphic manifestation of the change. The bond which had always existed between Minnedosans and hinterland farmers was broken primarily in an ideological sense. Two decades of prosperity confirmed the Minnedosan belief in laissez-faire, while the uneven distribution of that prosperity induced local farmers to seek equity through a combination of collective action and greater state intervention in the economy. More symbolically, the bond was broken in an economic sense. The farmers' loading platforms, consumers' co-operatives, and mail order purchasing reflected the new ideology, but obviously had little effect on Minnedosa's prosperity. Clearly the farmers' discontent was levelled at the prevailing economic system rather than at their town neighbors. While different rates of economic growth can account for the varying speeds at which townspeople and farmers moved away from their past, only the educational work of the Guide explains the very different directions in which they moved. By 1922 the farmer, like the townsman some years before, had acquired a significantly different perception of his position in the larger scheme of things. Unlike the townsman, however, he was unable to fulfill his new expectations because of financial instability. The Guide not only educated the farmer as to his inequitable economic position; it also attempted to provide feasible

methods of surmounting that position.

In like manner external instruments of change affected the transformation of women's status. In Minnedosa the process had begun in the early years of the twentieth century, but it was greatly accelerated by the creation of a Home Economics Society at the suggestion of extension workers from the Manitoba Agricultural College. Simultaneously the egalitarian philosophy of the Grain Growers' movement encouraged farm women to assume greater social responsibilities. By the start of the Great War their involvement in community affairs was substantial. The events of later years could only confirm and amplify the status they had already attained.

The concept of organizing formal children's activities was introduced by the itinerant school inspector, whose annual visits to all districts in the area spread new ideas to town and country at an equal rate. The nature of the activities indicates that Minnedosans and neighboring farmers identified closely with the general militarism of the period. Their growing interest in public health similarly demonstrates the degree to which local attitudes were now shaped by external influences. In a somewhat different vein, it is ironic to note that the economic measure of school consolidation had the unanticipated effect of homogenizing the worldviews of town and country children. Clearly the application of new ideas could have results other than those desired.

By 1922 Minnedosa was a transformed community. Its citizens had pursued the modernization ethic until new physical and service

features hid almost all traces of the frontier townscape. The changes of future years would be ones of degree rather than kind. The demands of women for more responsibility and of children for more services substantially modified the social structure of the town, and led to a gradual redistribution of social power. The acceptance of a radical ideology of agrarian reformism in the countryside altered traditionally close town-country relations, and revealed the superficial nature of wartime unity. Unlike the reformism affecting women and children, agrarian reformism would prove to be a transitory influence. Within a decade the town-country harmony of the 1890s would be re-established.

The transformation of rural society had taken place so swiftly, and yet so subtly, that neither Minnedosans nor their country neighbors seemed aware of the magnitude of the change. This was because efficient communication had done more than merely bring them change. It had made them the instruments of change.

CONCLUSION

The country town, with its concentration of people in a fixed location, is a recent feature of the Western Canadian landscape. Minnedosa is a case in point. The native groups and early mixed bloods who inhabited the Little Saskatchewan Valley for some two hundred years prior to European settlement had no permanent settlements. At the time of their initial intrusion into the area they were already participants in the European economy through the intermediary of the fur trade. The fur trade, like all economic systems, operated within a specific technological context. Its symbol was the trap, a highly portable tool which discouraged all notions of permanent settlement. The buffalo hunt which subsequently became the focus of native life in the valley was a similarly rootless activity based on the horse and the bow or rifle. Moreover, the tribes themselves led a migratory existence marked by a succession of hunting and trapping grounds. The fur trade post was the closest analog to a permanent settlement that the natives experienced, and even the posts could move several times in one lifetime. In short, there existed no impulse to build towns because the nomadic economy did not require them and could not long sustain them.

The concept of a town was introduced to the Little Saskatchewan Valley by a different culture operating within a very different technological framework. The introduction coincided with, and was influenced by, two major policy decisions at the national level. One was the inauguration of the National Policy, whose success depended upon the development of a western agricultural export economy. The other was

the projection of a new Canadian Pacific Railway route to run due west of Winnipeg and possibly through the Little Saskatchewan Valley. This perception of the western interior as an agricultural frontier necessarily involved the construction of towns to function as marketplaces, and their locations were determined by access to the railway which would link them with eastern markets.

Town-building was an enticing prospect in an age when material progress was equated with the advancement of civilization. Ambitious men hesitated only about the exact choice of site. In the Little Saskatchewan Valley a favorable site had already been marked by the enterprising John Tanner, whose own sense of place had been fixed by the revenues derived from a toll bridge. A handful of astute men, seeing the manner in which Tanner's bridge caught and directed the flow of settlers on the trail west, established small commercial enterprises near the site. Most of these merchants also filed on a homestead quarter which could serve as a townsite or simply as a hedge against the commercial investment. This tended to disperse businesses and therefore created many potential townsites.

The final choice of townsite in the valley depended upon the capital and enterprise of individual entrepreneurs. Speculation about the final route of the Canadian Pacific consolidated the entrepreneurs into two rival groups centered on the townsites of Odanah and Prairie City. A third interest appeared when J.S. Armitage built a gristmill and a sawmill at Tanner's Crossing and created the townsite of Minnedosa. All three parties were disappointed in 1881 when the CPR decided to build farther south. In other localities such railway decisions consigned

budding communities to oblivion, but the valley town-builders were given a second chance later in the same year. The Manitoba and North Western Railway was planning its route westward and offered its services to the highest bidder. Armitage spearheaded a movement to incorporate Minnedosa, which permitted the issuance of debentures with which to subsidize and thereby secure the railway. Through the leadership of one person, Minnedosa became the dominant metropole of north-western Manitoba.

The town Armitage built was not dissimilar to any other Western Canadian frontier community in appearance. Its buildings were mainly of frame construction and laid out in accordance with an overall grid-iron pattern. Main Street was the commercial thoroughfare, lined with false-fronted stores and offices. The principal service industries, the gristmill, sawmill, and several grain elevators, were situated along the railway tracks which bisected the town. Minnedosa's social structure was probably not unusual for the period. The family was the basic unit of social organization. Paternal authority was unquestioned and a woman's status depended on that of her husband. Children were seen as the custodians of the past and the hope of tomorrow, and lived highly regulated lives. Within the community as a whole there were status gradations based essentially on occupation and financial standing, but also on ethnicity, religion, age, and sex. Minnedosa was run by a wealthy professional and business elite composed exclusively of Anglo-Saxon/Celtic, Protestant men. Minnedosa's cultural composition was very similar to those of most other Manitoban towns. In

1886 ninety-three per cent of the citizenry was Anglo-Saxon/Celtic and eighty-seven per cent was Protestant. This homogeneity, which Minnedosa would always retain, was reflected in local institutions, recreational activities, and reform movements.

The relationship between Minnedosans and local farmers was principally economic. The town functioned as a retail and service center for a loyal farm clientele. Beyond this, townsfolk and country-folk were united by a common British-Canadian heritage. To some extent they participated jointly in recreational matters and in the governance of the town. Here one must draw a distinction between those farmers who lived close to Minnedosa, and were virtually town residents, and those whose farms were sufficiently distant to discourage participation in the affairs of the town. The latter structured their lives around district institutions such as schools and churches, and visited Minnedosa only when in need of specialized goods or services. This distinction notwithstanding, Minnedosans seem to have had a harmonious relationship with all local farmers prior to 1900.

Minnedosans spent their first two decades as a community consolidating their town's metropolitan status. The town's growth potential was from the first circumscribed by two factors. One was the economic resource base of the hinterland. Although the area was admirably suited to mixed farming and grain farming, it contained no extractive minerals, which meant that Minnedosa's economic stability would always depend primarily on agriculture. The other was the primitive transportation available to local farmers. Horse-drawn vehicles discouraged farmers from travelling more than five or ten miles for supplies

and services. If a service was specialized, as was the case with grist-milling, the range could be extended to as much as thirty miles. This obstacle of distance contributed to a proliferation of service centers in northwestern Manitoba, and introduced the element of competition among aspiring metropolises for the specialized trade. Minnedosa's chief rivals were Rapid City to the southwest and Neepawa to the east. The competition was decided by comparative trading advantages. Besides being a divisional point on the Manitoba and North Western, Minnedosa was favored with a culturally uniform citizenry which permitted the growth ethic to be pursued without factionalism. Furthermore, the cultural composition of the hinterland eliminated any ethnic-religious barriers to trade. And finally, Minnedosa's acquisition of specialized services attracted a large clientele. By 1907 at the latest the competition for hinterland was concluded. Rapid City began to decline, mainly because it lacked efficient communication and transportation links with the East. Minnedosa and Neepawa, possessing very similar trading advantages, developed at nearly the same rate.

Around 1900 Minnedosans began to experience the effects of a pronounced upturn in the world economy. For two decades they enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity. The townscape was changed greatly by the addition of numerous substantial homes, offices, stores, and public buildings. By the early 1920s the contours of modern Minnedosa were obvious. Most significant was the spatial segregation of the citizenry according to occupation and financial standing. At the same time technology caught up with the townspeople in the form of the telephone, electrical lighting, plumbing, and the automobile. Consumer demands

restructured Minnedosa's service sector. Technological change reached local farmers much more slowly and consequently town life became sharply differentiated from country life.

Improved communication links with the larger society reordered Minnedosa's social structure. Extension workers from the Manitoba Agricultural College introduced Minnedosan women to the concept of a Home Economics Society and thereby accelerated a trend toward greater female participation in civic affairs. In the early 1920s women would be attending political meetings and holding office on local school boards as a matter of course. The influence of another agent of the larger society, the school inspector, rapidly became apparent in the sphere of children's activities. These activities were tailored to meet the needs of the larger society and in turn spawned a new local concern for the needs of children. These status redefinitions were local manifestations of a much broader movement in Canadian society.

Local farmers did not enjoy the same degree of prosperity in these years, and consequently their material advancement was slower. The work of the Grain Growers' Association was directed at the elimination of this disparity. Across the West farmers took collective action as consumers and pressured the Dominion government for tariff reductions. This work continued unabated in the period from about 1906 to 1919. When such tactics failed to produce a more equitable situation, organized farmers turned to political action for redress. That local farmers subscribed to these radical views is apparent from their general support of farmers' candidates in provincial and Dominion elections. Their pursuit

of these new interests altered traditional town-country relations to a marked degree.

After 1922 certain themes of town development remained unchanged, while others continued to evolve. Minnedosa's modern physical, commercial, and recreational features were already defined; only its area would expand in accordance with its population growth. The greatest change in the status of women and children was a matter of record by the 1920s, and could henceforth only be elaborated upon. Town-country relations, on the other hand, were to improve dramatically as prosperity enabled local farmers to mechanize their operations and modernize their homes. Moreover, the almost universal acquisition of the automobile, the radio, and standard-brand goods would do more to democratize the town-country community than politics ever could. After 1951 most of the country towns in Manitoba began to decline and many disappeared. Minnedosa not only survived; it prospered.

APPENDIX A

CALCULATION OF THE BIRTHRATE IN MINNEDOSA, 1886

The estimate of the number of births per one thousand population in Minnedosa in 1886 (Chapter Three, p. 39) is as accurate as statistics allow. It was calculated in the following manner: since the number of children under one year of age is known for 1886, and since the number of families (assuming two adults per family) is calculable, the estimate of the birthrate is obtained by dividing the former by the latter and then multiplying by 1000, thus

$$\frac{16}{549} \times 1000 = 29.14$$

This is a very crude estimate of the birthrate, not only because not all families with children contain two adults, but also because it takes no account of the fact that some of the children aged 0-1 year may have been born in 1885.

APPENDIX B

RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

School District	Formed	School District	Formed
Cadurcis	1882	Makepeace	1891
Willowgrove	1882	Winterton	1892
Clanwilliam	1883	Edna	1892
Hazelwood	1884	Rosesneath	1892
Lakelet	1884	Tales	1892
Fairmount	1884	Hilltop	1893
Holland	1884	Franklin	1894
Lorndale	1884	Marlborough	1897
Bethany	1885	Lund	1902
Cameron	1885	Crocus Hill	1908
Coldstream	1885	Havelock	1909
Glenburnie	1885	Roche	1913
Rookhurst	1886	Nedrob	1919
Scandinavia	1888	Otter Lake	1935
McBride	1888	Nordlund	?
Westhope	1889	Westmount	?

APPENDIX C

RURAL CHURCHES

Church	Built
Fairmount Church	1876?
Cadurcis Church	1883
All Saint's, Minto R.M.	1884
Murchison Church	1890
St. John's, Bethany	1890
Bethlehem Congreg., Scandinavia	1893
St. Savior's, Odanah R.M.	1894
Holy Trinity, Edna	1900
Presbyterian, Basswood	1902
St. Mary's, Minto R.M.	1904
Mission Covenant, Smoland	1908
Moorepark Anglican	1910
Cameron Church	1913
Mountain Road Cathedral	1924

APPENDIX D

SOCIAL GROUPINGS

The social groupings employed in Table 20 are based on occupational classification. Michael Katz has argued that any occupational classification scheme, in order to be meaningful, must be based on the variables of wealth, occupation, and status. As valid as this argument is, it is impossible to meet its demands without such sources as census manuscript schedules and tax assessment rolls, neither of which is available for this period in Minnedosa's history. However, because the present study is not concerned with vertical social mobility (as are most studies using occupational classifications), it was possible to devise a simple occupational classification scheme for use as a sorting device.

Three distinct groupings are identified according to occupation. It is assumed that in general wealth and status correspond to occupation. The three groups are, (1) professionals, (2) proprietors, and (3) farmers.

Professionals are all those who require special (usually academic) training to be able to fulfill the demands of their occupation.

Included in this group are:	lawyers	architects
	physicians	engineers
	druggists	accountants
	dentists	bankers
	veterinarians	teachers
	clergy	

Proprietors are those who own their place of business or industry, hold franchises under the control of someone else, or work in a managerial

position for someone else. Thus this group includes all:

retailers
wholesalers
industrialists
franchise holders
managers

Professionals and proprietors can usually be identified through the use of a combination of sources, including Dun and Bradstreet Reference Books, Henderson's Directories, the Canadian Almanac, the local newspaper, and so on.

The third classification, Farmers, is self-explanatory. In those cases where an individual was both farmer and businessman, only his principal occupation was considered.

TABLE 1
POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY BIRTHPLACE: MINNEDOSA

<u>Birthplace (1886)</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Birthplace (1931)</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
England	69)				
Ireland	11)	20.6	British Isles	295	17.5
Scotland	33)				
Prince Edward Is.	1)				
Nova Scotia	4)				
New Brunswick	4)				
Quebec	7)	71.9	Canada	1253	74.5
Ontario	270)				
Manitoba	109)				
Sweden	9)				
U.S.A.	17)	7.3	Elsewhere	132	7.9
Other	15)				

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 2
POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY ORIGIN: MINNEDOSA
(expressed as percentage of total population)

<u>Year</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Irish</u>	<u>Scottish</u>	<u>Welsh</u>	<u>Total %</u>
1886	36.4	18.0	38.9	0.00	93.3
1901	41.6	20.5	24.9	0.19	87.2
1911	40.4	17.4	27.1	1.14	86.0
1921	44.5	17.0	24.9	0.93	87.3

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 3

POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY RELIGION: MINNEDOSA
(expressed as percentage of total population)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Anglican</u>	<u>Methodist</u>	<u>Presbyterian</u>	<u>Total %</u>
1886	21.9	16.4	49.0	87.3
1891	30.0	25.6	33.4	89.0
1901	26.4	26.7	29.7	82.8
1911	27.8	22.9	30.3	81.0
1921	29.2	23.0	35.5	87.7

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 4

POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY ORIGIN AND RELIGION: MARQUETTE
(expressed as percentage of total population)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Anglo-Saxon/Celtic</u>	<u>Protestant*</u>
1886	86.9	83.2
1901	72.2	68.9
1911	69.9	69.0
1921	63.5	61.5

*includes Anglicans, Methodists and Presbyterians.

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 5

POPULATION CLASSIFIED BY AGE: MINNEDOSA AND MARQUETTE, 1886

<u>Age</u>	<u>Minnedosa (%)</u>	<u>Marquette Census Division (%)</u>
0-16	41.2	39.6
16-21	9.4	9.0
21-31	25.9	34.0
31-41	14.6	12.7
41-51	5.7	6.7
51-61	1.7	3.9
61-71	1.1	1.9
71-81	0.18	0.6
81-91	0.18	0.2
91-101	0.00	0.009
Not given	1.74	4.4

Source: Census of Manitoba, 1885-1886.

TABLE 6

SEX RATIO: MINNEDOSA
(expressed as percentage of total population)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ratio (male/female)</u>	<u>Male (%)</u>	<u>Female (%)</u>
1886	125/100	55.6	44.4
1891	113/100	53.1	46.9
1901	109/100	52.1	47.9
1906	106/100	51.5	48.5

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 7

SEX RATIO: MARQUETTE CENSUS DIVISION
(expressed as percentage of total population)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ratio (male/female)</u>	<u>Male (%)</u>	<u>Female (%)</u>
1886	129/100	56.4	43.6
1891	134/100	57.3	42.7
1901	129/100	56.3	43.7
1906	137/100	57.8	42.2

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 8

MARRIED POPULATION OF MARQUETTE CENSUS DIVISION

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Number of Marriages</u>	<u>% of Population</u>
1886	22750	7393	32.5
1891	36069	11275	31.3
1901	34075	11374	33.4
1906	28435	9284	32.6

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 9

AGES OF THE MARRIED: MINNEDOSA, 1891

<u>Age</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0-16	0	0	0	0.00
16-21	0	4	4	0.65
21-31	24	40	64	10.42
31-41	37	31	68	11.07
41-61	30	25	55	8.95
61-71	9	2	11	1.79
71-81	0	0	0	0.00
81-91	1	1	2	0.32
91-101	0	0	0	0.00
Not given	0	0	0	0.00

Source: Census of Canada, 1891.

TABLE 10

DIVORCES: MARQUETTE CENSUS DIVISION AND MANITOBA
(expressed as percentage of total population)

<u>Year</u>	Marquette C.D.		Manitoba	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
1891	4	0.011	na	na
1901	8	0.023	na	na
1906	na	na	55	0.015

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 11

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY: MINNEDOSA AND MARQUETTE

Minnedosa			
<u>Year</u>	<u>Children (0-16 yrs.)</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Children/Family</u>
1886	223	113	1.97
1891	399	108	3.69
1901	673	187	3.59
1906	791	255	3.10
Marquette			
1886	9006	5517	1.63
1891	21160	7837	2.70
1901	19072	7629	2.49
1906	16548	5910	2.80

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 12

INDUSTRIAL WAGES: MARQUETTE, 1886

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Average Annual Wage</u>
Bakery	\$ 461
Carriage Manufacturing	440
Grist-milling	505
Printing Office	564
Saw Milling	172
Shoe Manufacturing	443
Dressmaking	271
Planing Mill	700
Harness Manufacturing	408
Tailoring	431

Source: Census of Manitoba, 1885-1886.

TABLE 13

NUMBER OF ROOMS PER HOUSE: MINNEDOSA, 1891

<u>Number of Rooms</u>	<u>Number of Houses</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
1	2	1.85
2	8	7.40
3	10	9.25
4	12	11.11
5	19	17.59
6-10	50	46.29
11-15	4	3.70
16 and over	3	2.77

Source: Census of Canada, 1891.

TABLE 14

CHILD LABORERS:* MARQUETTE, 1886

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Blacksmithing	1	0
Jewellers	0	1
Printing Office	2	0
Saw Mill	5	0
Tin Working	2	0

*under sixteen years of age.

Source: Census of Manitoba, 1885-1886.

TABLE 15

SIZE OF HOUSES: MINNEDOSA, 1891

<u>Number of Storeys</u>	<u>% of Homes</u>
1	27.0
2	71.3
3	1.7
4	0.0

Source: Census of Canada, 1891.

TABLE 16

POSTAL MONEY ORDER RECEIPTS:* MINNEDOSA, NEEPAWA, AND RAPID CITY

1886 - 1917

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minnedosa</u>	<u>Neepawa</u>	<u>Rapid City</u>
1886	10355	1924	4420
1887	9170	4454	4090
1888	11043	6676	7161
1889	25510	40756	22582
1890	18742	19933	13110
1891	17349	33609	18290
1892	17277	25121	15074
1893	17226	21888	12632
1894	16508	20957	12428
1895	19890	36226	11794
1896	16924	38292	11561
1897	17948	39972	12398
1898	20499	41874	11249
1899	19627	32178	15326
1900	20215	38985	17729
1901	19971	31513	19393
1902	26937	49110	29141
1903	33832	64269	32868
1904	35317	61928	35922
1905	37975	57950	41041
1906	30264	37299	29768
1907	47075	60479	31957
1908	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1909	57501	57819	41700
1910	57228	60479	31957
1911	59747	53906	41335
1912	83288	73481	46673
1913	103551	91837	44527
1914	97024	90293	41313
1915	96746	75923	42423
1916	101330	92011	39700
1917	109699	98614	44498

*all figures rounded to nearest dollar.

Source: CSP, Postmaster-General's Annual Reports, 1887-1918.

TABLE 17
POPULATIONS OF MINNEDOSA, NEEPAWA, AND RAPID CITY

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minnedosa</u>	<u>Neepawa</u>	<u>Rapid City</u>
1886	549	255	258
1891	614	774	543
1901	1052	1418	529
1906	1299	1895	738
1911	1483	1864	580
1916	1833	1854	658
1921	1505	1887	571

Source: Census of Manitoba and Census of Canada.

TABLE 18
MEMBERSHIP OF THE ODDFELLOWS AND THE MASONIC LODGE
(expressed in percentages)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Masonic Lodge</u>			<u>Oddfellows</u>		
	<u>Farmers</u>	<u>Townsmen</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Farmers</u>	<u>Townsmen</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
1886	17	58	25	10	80	10
1891	17	67	17	19	75	6
1896	?	83	17	25	69	6

Source: Minnedosa Tribune and Henderson's Directory.

TABLE 19

MEMBERSHIP OF THE MINNEDOSA AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

<u>Year</u>	<u>Farmers (%)</u>	<u>Townsmen (%)</u>	<u>Unknown (%)</u>
1886	70	30	0
1891	60	30	10
1896	67	37	0

Source: Minnedosa Tribune and Henderson's Directory.

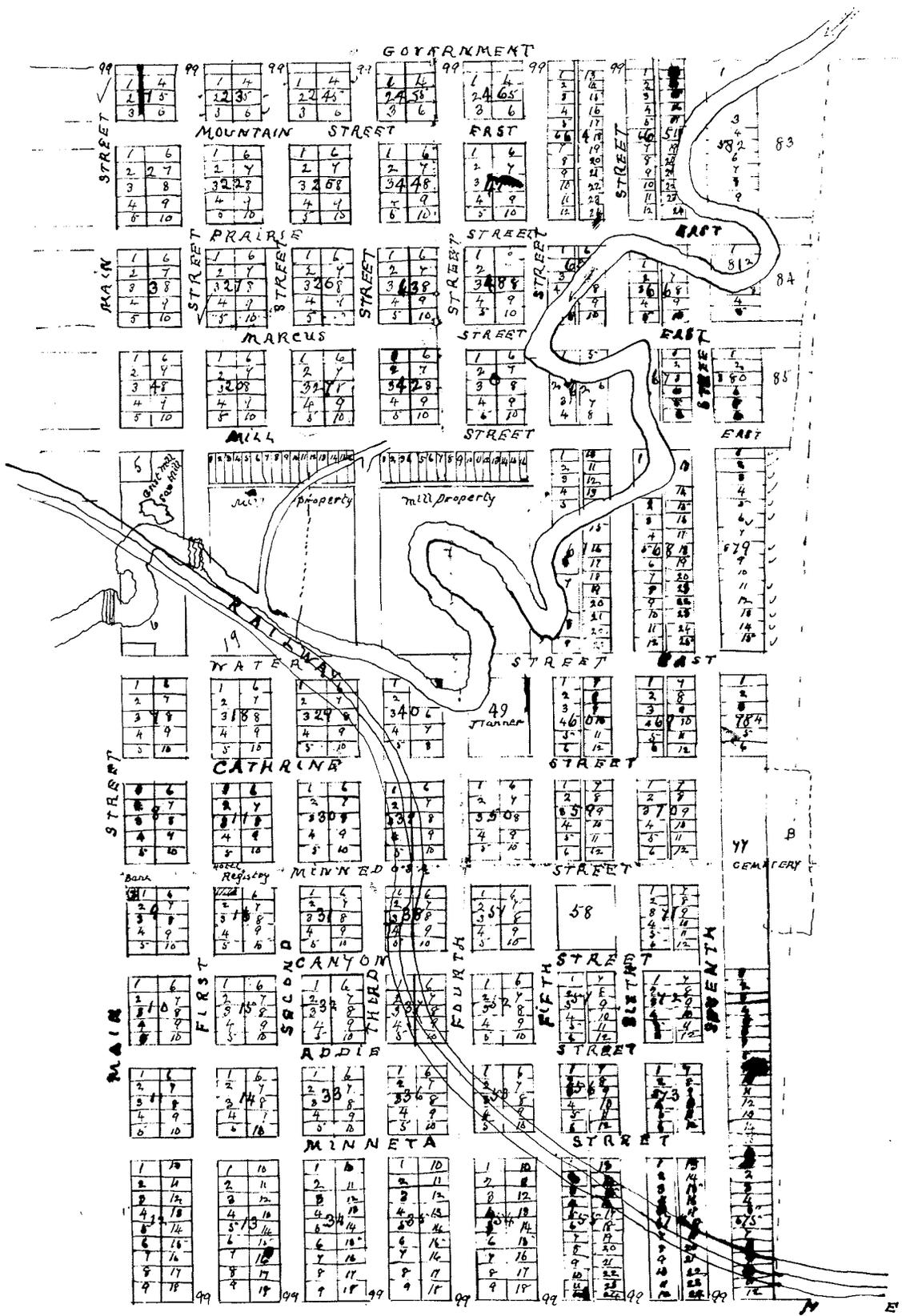
TABLE 20

MINNEDOSA TOWN COUNCIL COMPOSITION, 1883-1895

<u>Social Grouping*</u>	<u>Number of Terms Served</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
Professionals	9	5
Proprietors	56	26
Farmers	11	4
Unidentifiable	1	1

*See Appendix D for a discussion of social groupings.

Source: Minnedosa Tribune and Henderson's Directory.



Source: Minnedosa Town Office

Fig.1 Original Survey of the Minnedosa Townsite, 1879

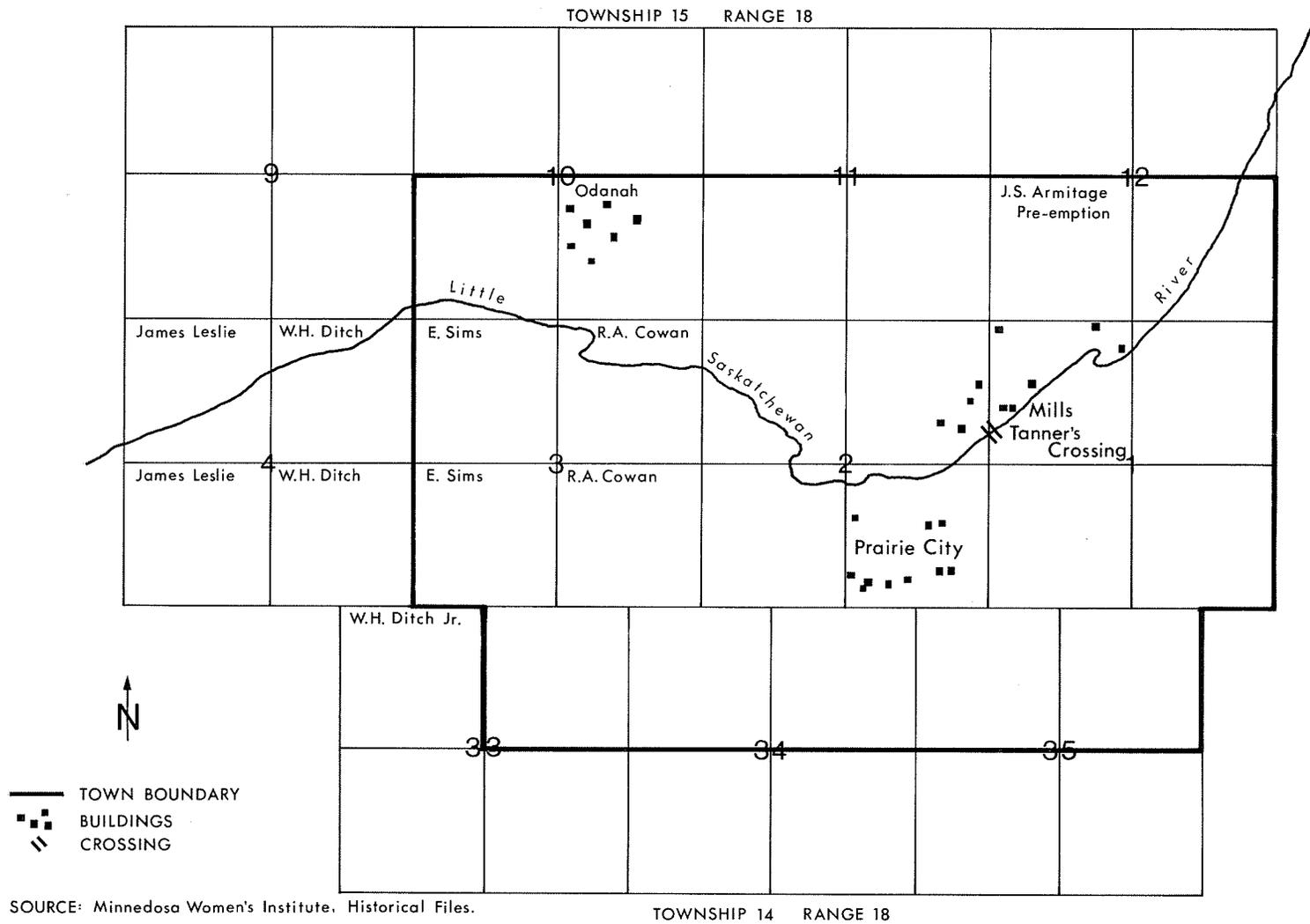
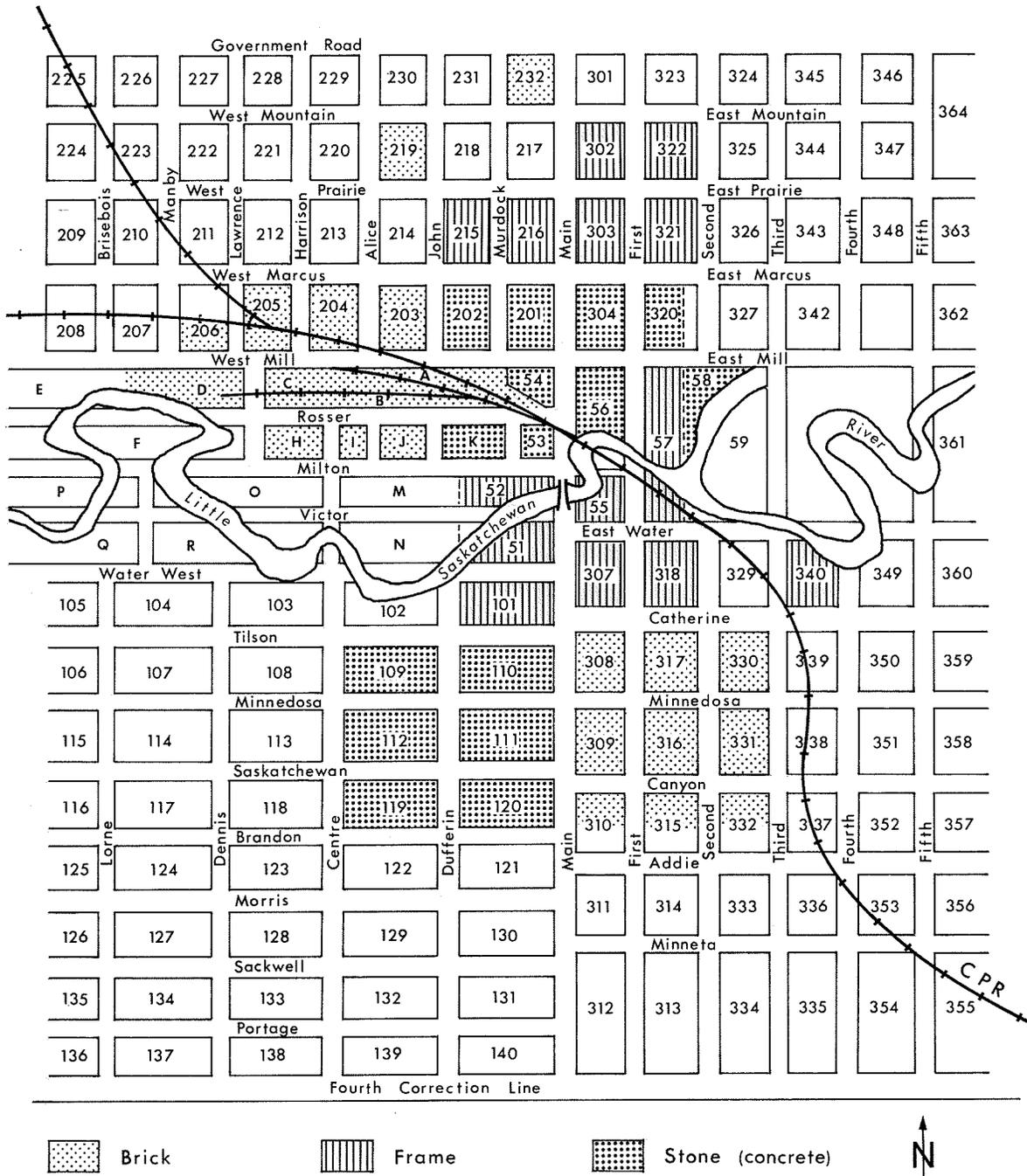


Fig. 2 Minnedosa Town Corporation Limits, 1883



SOURCE: The Insurance Plan of Manitoba Towns, 1916.

Fig. 3 Townsite of Minnedosa, 1916

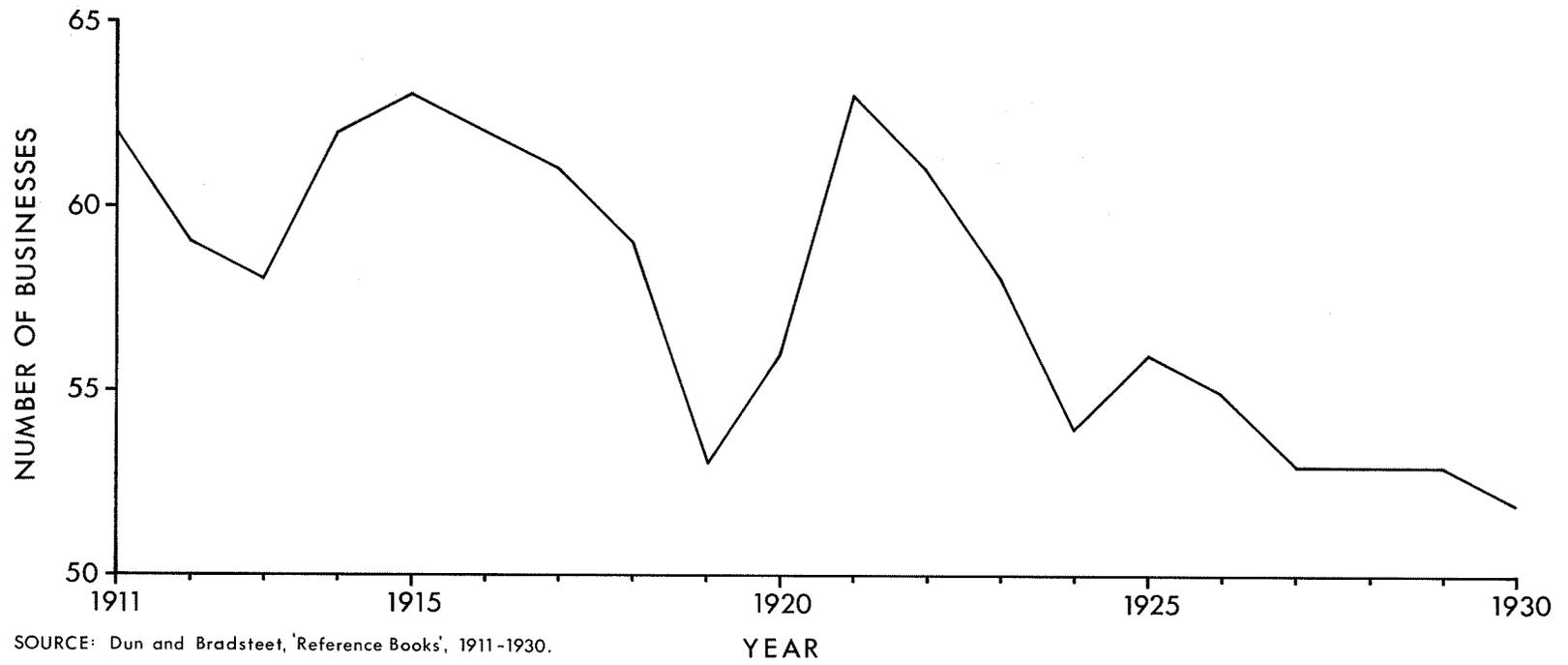


Fig.4 Number of Minnedosa Businesses, 1911-1930

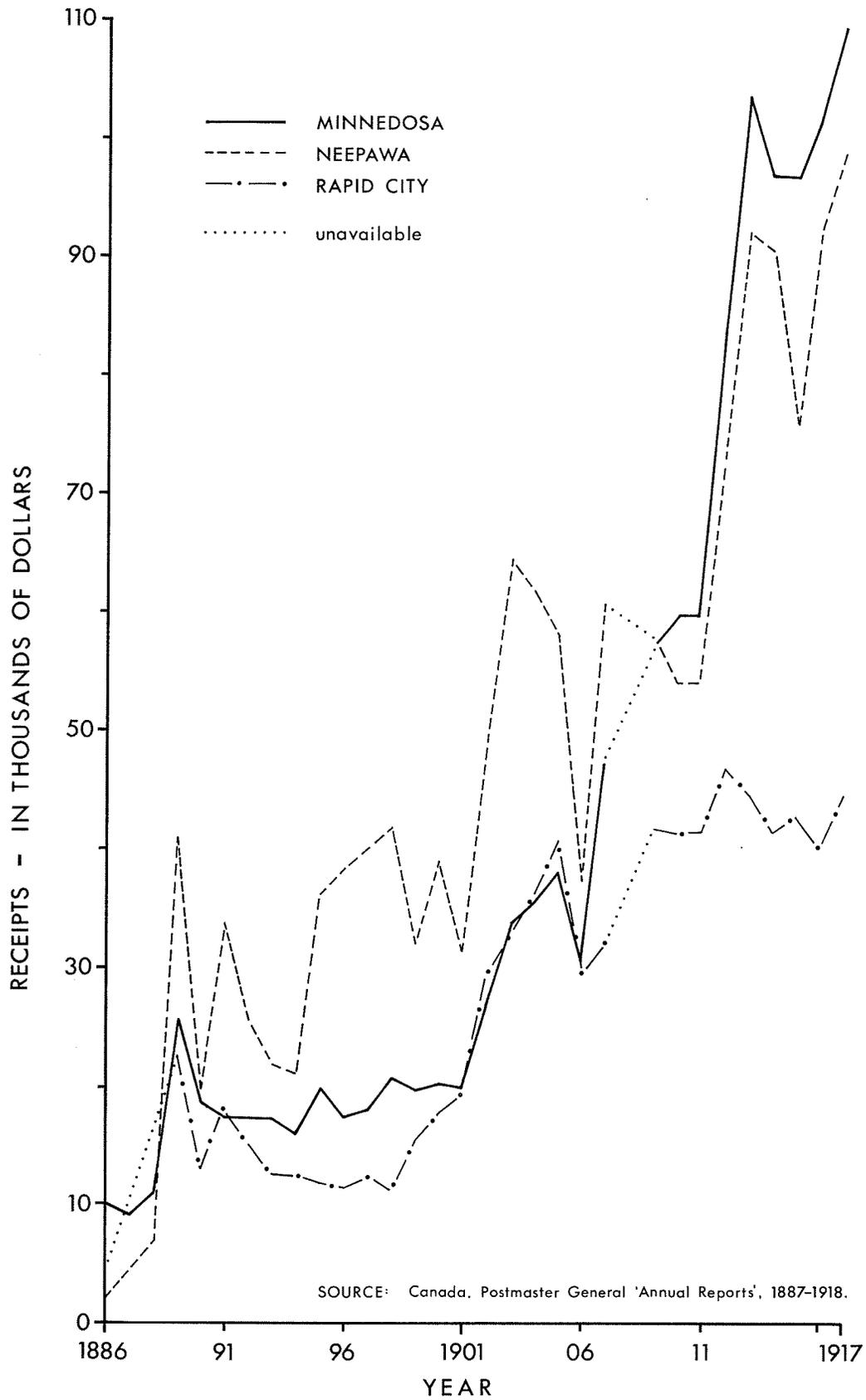


Fig.5 Postal Money Order Receipts, 1886-1917

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN NOTES

CSP	Canada, <u>Sessional Papers</u> .
D & B	Dun and Bradstreet.
Henderson's	<u>Henderson's Manitoba and North-West Gazetteer and Directory</u> (title varies).
HSSM	Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba.
MDFP	<u>Manitoba Daily Free Press</u> .
MFP	<u>Manitoba Free Press</u> .
MM	<u>Minnedosa Memories</u> (Minnedosa: n.p., 1958).
MSP	Manitoba, <u>Sessional Papers</u> .
MT	Minnedosa <u>Tribune</u> .
MWI, HF	Minnedosa Women's Institute, Historical Files.
PAM	Provincial Archives of Manitoba.
PLM	Provincial Library of Manitoba.
SC	Statutes of Canada.
SM	Statutes of Manitoba.

CHAPTER ONE

¹Canada, Legislative Assembly, Report on the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition, 1859 (prepared by Henry Youle Hind), 31.

²The Winnipeg Sun Midsummer Holiday Number, 1888, 44.

³Manitoba, Department of Industry and Commerce, Bureau of Industrial Development, Facts About Minnedosa, 1953 (prepared by J.H. Ellis), 11.

⁴Arthur J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade (Toronto, 1974). The information in this paragraph is based largely upon Ray's account of tribal movements from the seventeenth century on. See especially Chapter 1: Trade Rivalries, Warfare, and Migration, 3-26.

⁵Arthur S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 (London, 1939), 431-37.

⁶See the author's unpublished work, "The Paramilitary Role of Fort Ellice", prepared for the Manitoba Department of Tourism, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, Historic Resources Branch, November, 1975.

⁷Governor George Simpson, quoted in Ray, op. cit., 183.

⁸The phrase is Irene Spry's. See her "The Transition from a Nomadic to a Settled Economy in Western Canada", Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, VI, Series IV (June 1968), 187-201.

⁹See the author's unpublished report, "Missionaries at Fort Ellice", prepared for the Manitoba Department of Tourism, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, Historic Resources Branch, October, 1975.

¹⁰MM (Minnedosa, 1958), "The Indians", n.p.

¹¹CSP, 1887, Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year 1886, lviii.

¹²CSP, 1884, Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year 1883, 64.

¹³The heads of the four families were John Tanner, John Norquay, George Sanderson, and Peter Sinclair. (See MWI, HF, Dr. P.L. Neufeld to Mrs. Jack Wilson, 20 November 1975.) The exact dates of settlement have been lost in all cases except that of John Tanner, who is known to have arrived in 1870. (See MWI, HF, Biographical File on John Tanner.)

¹⁴The activities of Tanner's grandfather, who as a boy was captured by Indians and lived among them for years, may be read in John Tanner, A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner during Thirty Years Residence among the Indians of the Interior of North America, edited by Edwin James (New York, 1930).

¹⁵MWI, HF, Biographical File on John Tanner.

¹⁶The Trail was also known as the North West Trail or Edmonton Trail. Descriptions of it are numerous; see, for example, R.C. Russell, The Carlton Trail (Saskatoon, 1971); George A. Harland, Minnedosa and her Neighbors (Minnedosa, 1973); and Margaret Morton Fahrni and W.L. Morton, Third Crossing (Winnipeg, 1946).

¹⁷Different accounts note different crossing apparatus. It is likely that a crude ferry service was operated until such time as traffic was heavy enough to warrant the expenditure of labor involved in constructing a bridge.

¹⁸James Trow, Manitoba and the North West Territories (Toronto, 1970); facsimile of 1878 edition, 38-9.

¹⁹MM, op. cit., "Pioneer Settlement", n.p., and MT, 20 December 1906.

²⁰MWI, HF, File on Police, and John Peter Turner, The North-West Mounted Police, 1873-1893, Vol I (Ottawa, 1950), 208.

²¹See "The Paramilitary Role of Fort Ellice", op. cit., 19.

²²MM, op. cit., "The Indians", n.p.

²³E.M. Macdonald, A Short History [of] Minnedosa Post Office and Some Surrounding Post Offices (prepared for the Provincial Library of Manitoba, 1970?), n.p.

²⁴MDFP, 15 February 1879. See Table 1 for the origins of early valley settlers.

²⁵MT, 13 February 1958.

²⁶This account had been pieced together from several reminiscences of Minnedosa homesteaders.

²⁷PAM, Anonymous Account by Mrs. E.L.A. . . . of a trip from Liverpool to the Far West of Manitoba and experiences in establishing a homestead near Minnedosa 1880-1881, n.p.

²⁸MDFP, 5 September 1879.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., 27 October 1882. See also MM, op. cit., "Industries", n.p.

³¹E.A. Wharton Gill, A Manitoba Chore Boy (Toronto, 1912), 24.

³²MM, op. cit., "Industries", n.p.

³³Ibid., "Barn Raising", n.p.

³⁴Ibid., "The Next Generation Speaks", n.p.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Because of the lack of local information, this section has been based largely upon "Farming in Manitoba", The Emigrant 2:12 (May 1888), 200-1. The details of this article are corroborated by that local information which is available.

³⁸MDFP, 11 December 1879.

³⁹MM, op. cit., "Harvesting", n.p.

⁴⁰MDFP, 15 February 1879.

⁴¹MM, op. cit., "Life of Our Pioneer Women", n.p.

⁴²Ibid., "Quilting Bees", n.p.

⁴³MT, 13 February 1958, "Reminiscences of W.G. Sanderson".

CHAPTER TWO

- ¹MDFP, 1 March 1879.
- ²Ibid., 1 May 1879.
- ³MM, op. cit., "Minnedosa Begins", n.p.
- ⁴MDFP, 1 May 1879.
- ⁵Ibid.
- ⁶Ibid., 1 March 1879.
- ⁷Mrs. E.J. Brown, "Early Days of Minnedosa", HSSM, Transactions, Series III, No. 21 (1964-65), 7.
- ⁸MWI, HF. Correspondence File, C.T.W. Hyslop, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, to Mrs. E.J. Brown, 1 August 1963.
- ⁹Mrs. E.J. Brown, op. cit., 7.
- ¹⁰MDFP, 11 August 1880.
- ¹¹Florence Brown, "Odanah", Manitoba Pageant, 5:2 (January 1960), 19.
- ¹²MDFP, 15 July 1880.
- ¹³Ibid.
- ¹⁴Ibid., 19 April 1880.
- ¹⁵PAM. Correspondence of William Lothian. William Lothian to George Lothian, 23 April 1881.
- ¹⁶MDFP, 15 July 1880
- ¹⁷Ibid., 11 August 1880.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Lothian, op. cit.

²⁰For biographical information on Armitage, see Ed. J. Brown, "The Old Flour Mill at Minnedosa", Manitoba Pageant, XXI:3 (Spring 1976), 3-4.; MWI, HF, Biographical File on J.S. Armitage; and MT, 9 January 1958.

²¹Tanner had not yet been granted his quarter section by the Dominion government. The grant was made on 23 December 1879. See "Dominion Lands Grant to John Tanner of Halls Ford, N.W.T. T15, R18W of 1st M, Sec. NW¼ of 1", kept at Minnedosa Town Office.

²²MDFP, 13 November 1879.

²³Ibid., 6 August 1879.

²⁴Ibid., 13 November 1879.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Winnipeg Daily Times, 21 January 1880.

²⁷The date of the conveyance was 1 April 1880. See the "Agreement for Sale", kept at Minnedosa Town Office.

²⁸The Manitoba Daily Free Press called him a man of "considerable means." (MDFP 13 November 1879).

²⁹MDFP, 7 June 1880.

³⁰In November of 1879 the MDFP indicated that the final decision on the railway route was not known in the valley, or, for that matter, in Winnipeg. It seems, however, that Ottawa may have decided by that date, for on 22 January 1880 the Crossing route was confirmed by Order-in-Council.

³¹Sir Sandford Fleming, Report and Documents in Reference to the Canadian Pacific Railway, 1880 (Ottawa, 1880), 246.

³²Ibid., 24.

³³ Armitage clearly had political contacts at Ottawa. For example, in October of 1880 the residents of the Crossing were clamoring for better mail service, and, as Armitage was on his way to Ottawa on business, they gave him a petition to present to the proper authorities there. Armitage returned within a month with the desired concessions. (See MDFP, 4 October 1880 and 11 November 1880.) There are also indications that Armitage's principal contact was John Stoughton Dennis, Deputy Minister of the Interior. The evidence, all circumstantial, consists of the following:

1) Dennis, as an officer in the militia during the Fenian raids of 1866 and 1869, was stationed at Port Colborne. Armitage may have met him there.

2) Dennis held land as a speculator in Minnedosa and Odanah in the 1880s and may have tried to influence the volume of business in neighboring Rapid City by omitting it from Department of the Interior maps of 1882.

3) In a NWT election of 1881 for the electoral district of Minnedosa, one Hugh Dennis (relative?) was running until J.S. Armitage entered the contest, at which time Dennis withdrew in his favor.

4) There is a Dennis street in Minnedosa.

³⁴ MDFP, 11 December 1879.

³⁵ Ibid., 29 July 1880.

³⁶ Ibid., 24 September 1880.

³⁷ A Free Press report of 11 November 1880 indicates that the grist mill had been operating for a short time.

³⁸ MDFP, 14 December 1880. The report notes that Armitage's mill probably saved the local farmers \$15,000 that winter.

³⁹ Lothian, op. cit., undated letter.

⁴⁰ MDFP, 20 September 1880.

⁴¹ Ibid., 2 July 1880.

⁴² Ibid., 29 July 1880.

- ⁴³Ibid., 6 September 1880.
- ⁴⁴Lothian, op. cit., William Lothian to Peter Lothian, 24 January 1880.
- ⁴⁵MM, op. cit., "Education", n.p.
- ⁴⁶MDFP, 16 August 1880.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., 11 July 1881.
- ⁴⁸Lothian, op. cit., William Lothian to Peter Lothian, 24 January 1880.
- ⁴⁹For an account of a Presbyterian social, see MDFP, 11 December 1880.
- ⁵⁰MDFP, 29 August 1881.
- ⁵¹MM, op. cit., "Fraternal Organizations and Clubs", n.p.
- ⁵²MDFP, 2 November 1881.
- ⁵³Ibid., 3 February 1881.
- ⁵⁴MM, op. cit., "Fraternal Organizations and Clubs", n.p.
- ⁵⁵MWI, HF, "Facts Collected and Presented in Song and Pageant by the Women's Institute", 7 October 1937, n.p.
- ⁵⁶MDFP, 6 September 1880.
- ⁵⁷PAM, Anonymous account by Mrs. E.L.A. . . . op. cit., n.p.
- ⁵⁸MDFP, 11 August 1881.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., 26 March 1879.
- ⁶⁰The county was an enormous administrative unit. When broken up in 1883 the municipalities of Odanah, Saskatchewan, Harrison, Blanchard, Clanwilliam, and Strathclair were created (see SM, 49 Vic., C.53).

⁶¹Hendersons, 1882, and MM, op. cit., "Stores", n.p.

⁶²D. & B, Reference Books, 1883. These references are not necessarily complete listings of businesses in a town for this early period. They do include all those manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers who at some point made a credit purchase. (Personal communication with James T. McEwan, Prairie Zone Manager, Dun and Bradstreet, 17 January 1977.)

⁶³Ibid. For each business listed in their Reference Books, Dun and Bradstreet provides an estimated "Financial Strength". This estimate refers to the tangible net worth, or total assets of the business, less total liabilities, less the amount of any intangible asset such as Goodwill that was shown as an asset. (Personal communication with James T. McEwan, Prairie Zone Manager, Dun and Bradstreet, 17 January 1977.)

⁶⁴The account which follows has been pieced together from various sources. See especially MWI, HF, File on Railways for a number of accounts (mostly oral history) relating various parts of an extremely complex story. See also an article by Dr. William John Rose, "Early Minnedosa: The Crossing, The Town, and The Railway", HSSM, Transactions, Series III, No. 15 (1960), 69-79. The Rose article is the least credible source of information. Correspondents' reports to the Manitoba Daily Free Press have been used to establish the sequence of events.

⁶⁵SM, 43 Vic., C.35.

⁶⁶MDFP, 7 March 1881.

⁶⁷See MWI, HF, File on Railways.

⁶⁸MDFP, 29 March 1882.

⁶⁹Ibid., 28 February 1882.

⁷⁰Ibid., 15 March 1882.

⁷¹PAM. Sir John A. Macdonald Papers (hereinafter Macdonald Papers), #112105-112106. C.J. Whellams to Sir John A. Macdonald, 16 February 1882.

⁷²MDFP, 3 March 1882

⁷³Ibid., 4 April 1882

⁷⁴Ibid., 21 June 1882, 5 July 1882 and 13 July 1882

⁷⁵Ibid., 9 August 1882.

⁷⁶Ibid., 28 August 1882.

⁷⁷Ibid., 10 May 1882.

⁷⁸Ibid., 5 July 1882.

⁷⁹See ibid., 28 August 1882 and 31 August 1882.

⁸⁰Ibid., 7 September 1882.

⁸¹Ibid., 28 August 1882.

⁸²SM, 42 Vic., C3. The general requirements for incorporation as a town were that a petition had to be made to the Lieutenant-Governor by at least two-thirds of the male freeholders or householders having at least three months residence who are over twenty-one years; that at least 100 males must petition; and that one month's notice of the intention to incorporate must be given in the Manitoba Gazette as well as posted in two of the most frequented parts of the locality to be incorporated.

⁸³MDFP, 19 October 1882.

⁸⁴Minnedosa Town Charter, 2 March 1883, kept at Minnedosa Town Office.

⁸⁵MM, op. cit., "Government", n.p.

⁸⁶MDFP, 28 August 1882 and Henderson's, 1883.

⁸⁷MWI, HF, File on Railways.

⁸⁸MDFP, 19 March 1883.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰See the agreement between the Manitoba and North Western Railway Company and the Corporation of the Town of Minnedosa, 3 July 1883, kept at the Minnedosa Town Office.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²MDFP, 18 July 1883.

⁹³Ibid., 22 June 1883.

⁹⁴MT, 10 July 1958.

CHAPTER THREE

¹MDFP, 4 April 1881.

²See Table 2.

³MM, op. cit., "Scandinavia", n.p. See also the correspondence of William Lothian, op. cit.

⁴See Table 3.

⁵See Table 4.

⁶W.L. Morton, "A Century of Plain and Parkland", in Richard Allen (ed.), A Region of the Mind (Regina, 1973), 172.

⁷See Table 5.

⁸MDFP, 6 January 1879.

⁹See Table 6.

¹⁰See Table 7.

¹¹See Table 8.

¹²See Table 9.

¹³Statistics for Marquette (1891 and 1901) show that there was about one divorced person per one thousand population. The same figure applies to the province as a whole in 1906. See Table 10.

¹⁴See Appendix A.

¹⁵See Table 11.

¹⁶PAM, Anonymous account by Mrs. E.L.A. . . . , op. cit., n.p.

¹⁷MT, 17 July 1885.

¹⁸Newspaper accounts indicate lawn tennis and trapshooting began in 1886, cricket in 1887, and curling at about the same time.

¹⁹The first polo match at Minnedosa was played in 1897. Fox-hunting, or more correctly wolf-hunting, cannot be accurately dated but it was prevalent throughout the 1890s and early 1900s. A.S. Morton, in his A History of Prairie Settlement (Toronto, 1938), suggests a starting date in the 1880s (see page 79).

²⁰In their article, "Pioneer Drinking Habits and the Rise of the Temperance Agitation in Upper Canada Prior to 1840" (in F.H. Armstrong, et al. (eds.), Aspects of Nineteenth Century Ontario, Toronto, 1974, pp. 171-193), M.A. Garland and J.J. Talman have argued that American temperance influences were marked in Upper Canada in the 1830s (see page 181). The pressure for temperance legislation increased until in 1878 the Ontario government passed the Canada Temperance Act (see Peter B. Waite, Canada, 1874-1897: Arduous Destiny Toronto 1971, 88-89). In Great Britain, the Temperance Party "became a force in Liberal politics in the 1870s", according to G.M. Trevelyan. (See his English Social History, London, 1942, 569-571.)

²¹MDFP, 26 March 1879.

²²MT, 16 May 1889.

²³PAM, Women's Christian Temperance Union Collection, Annual Report of the WCTU for 1890-91.

²⁴PLM, Manitoba Election Records Since 1870 (microfilm).

²⁵D & B, Reference Books, 1892.

²⁶PAM, Anonymous account by Mrs. E.L.A. . . . op. cit., n.p.

²⁷MT, 11 June 1891.

²⁸Ibid., 24 January 1901.

²⁹MWI, HF, File on Military.

³⁰MM, op. cit., "Military Action", n.p.

³¹MT, 3 April 1885.

³²MWI, HF, Biographical File on E.A. Brisebois. For full details of Brisebois's life, see Hugh Dempsey, "Brisebois: Calgary's Forgotten Founder", in A.W. Rasporich and Henry Klassen (eds.), Frontier Calgary (Calgary, 1975), 28-40.

³³MWI, HF, File on Military, "List of Home Guards, dated 3 March 1885".

³⁴PAM, Thomas Greenway Papers, #4888, R.Hill Myers to Thomas Greenway, n.d. (sometime in 1892).

³⁵MT, 23 July 1896.

³⁶Ibid., 2 November 1899.

³⁷Ibid., 9 November 1899.

³⁸This was the Reverend Todd's son.

³⁹MWI, HF, File on Military.

⁴⁰MM, op. cit., "Military Action", n.p. It is also suggestive that E.A.W. Gill, resident minister and author of three books based on his experiences while at Minnedosa, structured his An Irishman's Luck around the subplot of a Minnedosa man who goes off to fight in the Boer War.

⁴¹David Gagan and Herbert Mays, "Historical Demography and Canadian Social History: Families and Land in Peel County, Ontario", in Michiel Horn and Ronald Sabourin (eds.), Studies in Canadian Social History (Toronto, 1974), 96.

⁴²D & B, Reference Books, 1885.

⁴³PAM, Agriculture and Immigration Records. Letter Book of J.S. Armitage, Provincial Immigration Agent, 1887-89, Letter to Robert Murdock, 16 April 1887.

⁴⁴Ibid., Armitage to Rev. F.R. Hole, 8 April 1887.

⁴⁵This rough estimate was calculated by subtracting the number of Minnedosa proprietors (multiplied by four, the average 1886 family size) from the total 1886 population of 549. The result, 389 people, represents 68.3% of the total population. Since some of the ordinary people appear to have been bachelors, and since not all town businesses are listed in Dun and Bradstreet's Reference Books, an arbitrary eight or nine per cent variation has been allowed.

⁴⁶See Table 12.

⁴⁷This is based on census data for Minnedosa in 1891. Over 95% of local homes were of wooden construction, and 98% had one or two storeys.

⁴⁸Henderson's of 1887 lists many 'ordinary people' who resided at the Brunswick Hotel.

⁴⁹See D & B, Reference Books for any year. Almost without exception, the names are Anglo-Saxon or Celtic in origin. If these names are compared with those on the membership lists of the Methodist Church, for example, many are found to be the same. (See United Church Archives, "Minnedosa Circuit Membership, 1887-1905".) Since the town was overwhelmingly Protestant, it is conjectured that most other merchants and professionals were Protestant church members.

⁵⁰The list of names was compiled by consulting D & B, Reference Books, which lists most town merchants, and various other sources which indicate the names of Minnedosan professionals. Clergy are excluded from all calculations.

⁵¹St. John's College Magazine, XX:2 (December 1907), 41.

⁵²MWI, HF, "Memories of My High School Days" (anonymous).

⁵³MT, 18 May 1887.

⁵⁴See Table 13.

⁵⁵These records are D & B, Reference Books; see Chapter Two, note 62.

⁵⁶See, for example, MT, 19 March 1886 (Church of England Ladies' Aid Auxiliary); MT, 30 April 1886 (Presbyterian Ladies' Association); and MT, 23 July 1886 (Methodist Church Ladies' Aid).

⁵⁷MT, 20 August 1886.

⁵⁸D & B, Reference Books, 1896. Mrs. Ranson was operating a grocery store.

⁵⁹MT, 22 December 1892.

⁶⁰W.L. Morton, "Victorian Canada", in his The Shield of Achilles (Toronto, 1965), 323.

⁶¹See Table 14.

⁶²MDFP, 1 May 1879.

⁶³MT, 10 July 1958.

⁶⁴The Nor'-West Farmer and Manitoba Miller, 15:10, New Series 20 (October 1886), 639.

⁶⁵The following observations are based on two sketch-maps, one from the Nor'-West Farmer, op. cit., 637, and the other from the Winnipeg Sun Midsummer Holiday Number, 1888, as well as on photographs of the town kept at PAM.

⁶⁶See Table 15.

⁶⁷PAM, Architectural and Historical Survey, 1964-70, Volume II, 35.

⁶⁸Ibid., 36.

⁶⁹The cattle pens and barns are clearly shown in a sketch of Minnedosa in the Winnipeg Sun Midsummer Holiday Number, 1888. For a view of the backyard privies, see the photograph collection on Minnedosa at PAM.

⁷⁰As late as 1891 there were still 687 chickens within the town limits (see Census of Canada, 1891).

⁷¹W.J. Rose, "A Farm Lad in Town", in MM, op. cit., n.p.

⁷²Nor'-West Farmer and Manitoba Miller, op. cit., 636.

⁷³MM, op. cit., "Stores", n.p. The facts which follow are also from this source.

⁷⁴W.J. Rose, "A Farm Lad in Town", op. cit.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Winnipeg Daily Times, 29 September 1880.

⁷⁷Ed. J. Brown, "The Old Flour Mill at Minnedosa", Manitoba Pageant, XXI:3 (Spring 1976), 4.

- ⁷⁸Winnipeg Daily Times, 29 September 1880.
- ⁷⁹Henderson's, 1888.
- ⁸⁰D & B, Reference Books, 1883.
- ⁸¹MT, 7 December 1883.
- ⁸²Ibid., 9 January 1885.
- ⁸³MT, 1957 (exact date unknown) Clipping in files of MWI, Biographical File on Patrick Burns.
- ⁸⁴D & B, Reference Books, 1883.
- ⁸⁵Henderson's, 1885.
- ⁸⁶D & B, Reference Books, 1883 and Henderson's, 1882 and 1883.
- ⁸⁷MSP, Report of the Department of Agriculture and Statistics of the Province of Manitoba for the Year 1882, 185.
- ⁸⁸Dr. William John Rose, "Early Minnedosa: The Crossing, The Town and The Railway", op. cit., 79.
- ⁸⁹Henderson's, 1881.
- ⁹⁰Ibid., 1889.
- ⁹¹Ibid. The lawyers were Alexander Stewart, G.W. Beynon, and R. Hill Myers.
- ⁹²MDFP, 13 July 1882.
- ⁹³MT, 30 January 1890.
- ⁹⁴Tom Naylor, The History of Canadian Business, 1867-1914 (Toronto, 1975), Vol. I, 148.
- ⁹⁵MT, 6 July 1893.

⁹⁶Ibid., 28 September 1893, and Canadian Almanac, 1894.

⁹⁷Canadian Almanac, 1898.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹After 1905 Minnedosa was served by the Union Bank and the Bank of Hamilton.

CHAPTER FOUR

¹MT, 10 September 1886.

²Naylor, op. cit., 244.

³The figures, rounded to the nearest dollar in each case, are taken from MSP, Municipal Commissioner's Annual Reports, and Dr. William John Rose, "Early Minnedosa: The Crossing, The Town, and The Railway", op. cit., 79.

⁴SM, 52 Vic., C.40.

⁵MT, 29 November 1888, and A.T. Drummond to Judge D.M. Walker, 22 November 1888, kept at Minnedosa Town Office.

⁶A.T. Drummond to Judge D.M. Walker, op. cit.

⁷PAM, Thomas Greenway Papers, #1453, R.H. Myers to Thomas Greenway, 23 March 1888.

⁸The Winnipeg Sun Midsummer Holiday Number, 1888, 44-45.

⁹Greenway, op. cit.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹MT, 13 September 1888.

¹²Ibid. Such a commission was provided for by SM, 50 Vic., C.39.

¹³MT, 13 September, 1888.

¹⁴D.M. Walker to James Prendergast, n.d. (sometime in December 1888), letter at Minnedosa Town Office.

¹⁵SM, 52 Vic., C.40.

¹⁶MT, 7 March 1889.

¹⁷Such petitioning began as early as 1890, and continued for decades. The Roblin government (1900-1915) was more sympathetic to the town's appeals for assistance. See "Report on the Minnedosa debenture settlement given by Mayor Butchart on 5 April 1911", kept at Minnedosa Town Office.

¹⁸See MT, 2 July 1925. Cannon had been apprenticed to a Chester (England) newspaper at the age of fourteen, and subsequently worked for newspaper firms in Quebec, Kingston, the United States, Ottawa, Rapid City and Winnipeg. In 1883 he came to Minnedosa as a typesetter. He purchased the Tribune from W. Gibbens in 1884, and remained editor until his retirement in 1919. He died in 1925 at the age of 84.

¹⁹The instances when such petitioning was done are too numerous to list. For an example of an appeal from town council to the provincial government, see MT, 5 February 1891. For appeals to the Dominion government, see MT, 22 August 1889 and 27 March 1890. An example of the less frequent petitioning by citizens can be found in MT, 19 February 1886.

²⁰Macdonald Papers, #151836, "Minnedosa Corporation Petition", August 1886.

²¹PAM, "I Took to the Road", unpublished autobiography of James L. Malcolm, 9.

²²Ibid., 61.

²³D & B, Reference Books, 1898.

²⁴Ibid., 1904.

²⁵MT, 29 February 1884 and 20 March 1885.

²⁶Ibid. See also The Winnipeg Sun Midsummer Holiday Number, 1888, 44.

²⁷Winnipeg Sun, op. cit., 44.

²⁸MT, 18 December 1885.

²⁹Ibid., 16 March 1888.

³⁰Ibid., 8 April 1887.

³¹Winnipeg Sun, op. cit., 44.

³²Greenway Papers, #3576, F.R. Hole to Thomas Greenway, 18 March 1891.

³³PAM, Francis R. Hole, "Circular Letter undertaking settlement and supervision of immigrant youth on Manitoba farms", c.1891.

³⁴MT, 5 March 1886.

³⁵That this was the hinterland is apparent from innumerable newspaper articles which deal with the trade relations between Minnedosa and the outlying communities. The range of sports competitions and the locations of the rural newspaper correspondents lead to the same conclusion. See also MM, op. cit., especially the section on rural municipalities and villages.

³⁶CSP, Postmaster-General's Annual Reports. See Table 16 for a summary.

³⁷See Table 17.

³⁸This was the Saskatchewan and Western Railway, built in 1886.

³⁹J.H. Ellis, quoted in Facts About Minnedosa, Manitoba Department of Industry and Commerce, Bureau of Industrial Development, 1953, 9.

⁴⁰The Nor'-West Farmer and Manitoba Miller (August 1889), 213.

⁴¹The information in this paragraph is derived from three sources: Census of Manitoba, 1885-1886; Census of Canada, 1891; and Municipal Census of Manitoba, 1896 (in MSP, 1897). All calculations are based on data from five rural municipalities within Minnedosa's known hinterland.

⁴²These observations are based on a study of D & B, Reference Books, 1883-1901.

⁴³The loyalty of patrons was important to the economic well-being of every community because the geographical concentration of towns always provided hinterland residents with an alternate trading center. A good illustration of this point can be found in MT, 14 October 1897. Local farmers, dissatisfied with the low grain prices offered at Minnedosa, threatened to abandon their "natural market" for one in which they would receive a fairer price, namely Franklin or Neepawa.

⁴⁴In virtually every line of retailing there were several different establishments serving the customers of Minnedosa and area. The same applied, though to a lesser degree, to the town's service industries. See D & B, Reference Books, 1883-1895.

⁴⁵MT, 17 October 1895. This attitude toward northern Europeans was common among late-Victorian WASPs. Even George Parkin, the archetypal British imperialist, could in 1892 write that "Canada will belong to the sturdy races of the north - Saxon and Celt, Scandinavian, Dane and Northern German . . .", quoted in Carl Berger, The Sense of Power (Toronto, 1970), 131. George Emery makes the same point in his doctoral dissertation, "Methodism on the Canadian Prairies, 1896 to 1914: The Dynamics of an Institution in a New Environment", (Ph.D., University of British Columbia, 1970), 25.

⁴⁶MM, op. cit., "Fraternal Organizations and Clubs", n.p.

⁴⁷MWI, HF, "Facts Collected and Presented in Song and Pageant" 7 October 1937. The membership included seven farmers and six townsmen.

⁴⁸Ibid.; thirteen farmers and seven townsmen were charter members.

⁴⁹Ibid.; six farmers and nine townsmen belonged.

⁵⁰Membership lists for the Orange Lodge are too incomplete to permit analysis. See Table 18 for a breakdown of the membership of the Masons and the Oddfellows.

⁵¹MT, 15 January 1891.

⁵²See Table 19.

⁵³MWI, HF, Biographical Files.

⁵⁴Ibid., Biographical File on Robert McAree.

⁵⁵Ibid., Biographical File on T.D. Taylor.

⁵⁶Ibid., Biographical File on David Cannon.

⁵⁷MT, 5 October 1887.

⁵⁸SM, 42 Vic., C.3, s.XLIII.

⁵⁹See Table 20.

⁶⁰The Colonist, II:4 (September, 1896), 89.

⁶¹D & B, Reference Books, 1896, and various other sources.

CHAPTER FIVE

¹Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto, 1974); see especially Chapter 1.

²W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Second reprint; Toronto, 1971), 4.

³These totals represent the populations of the following census subdivisions: Riding Mountain, Odanah, Saskatchewan, Blanchard, Clanwilliam, Harrison, Strathclair, and Shoal Lake. These subdivisions approximate the boundaries of Minnedosa's hinterland.

⁴The Colonist, II:4 (November, 1896), 116.

⁵See Appendix B.

⁶See Appendix C.

⁷See MM, op. cit., for many examples of this.

⁸For examples of this, see EAW Gill, An Irishman's Luck (Toronto, 1914), 9, and also his Love in Manitoba (Toronto, 1911), 73.

⁹The exact number is uncertain since for many years the Postmaster-General's Annual Reports listed only 'accounting' post offices. As nearly as can be ascertained there were six rural post offices begun in the 1880s, four in the 1890s, and one in 1904. There was also one called Creeford near the Glenburnie School south of Minnedosa, but its opening date has not been determined.

¹⁰Census of Canada, 1901.

¹¹MM, op. cit., "Franklin and Hun's Valley", n.p.

¹²Ibid.

¹³There are several references to the language barrier in Minnedosa Memories. See also E.A.W. Gill's two novels, An Irishman's Luck and Love in Manitoba for an Anglo-Saxon view of the Scandinavian retention of traditional language and culture.

¹⁴MT, 18 January 1884.

¹⁵PAM, Manitoba and North West Farmers' Union, Scrapbook, 1883-1884; speech of John A. Brown, 130.

¹⁶James A. Jackson, The Centennial History of Manitoba (Toronto, 1970), 123-124.

¹⁷Manitoba and North West Farmers' Union Scrapbook, op. cit., 130.

¹⁸Brian R. McCutcheon, "The Patrons of Industry in Manitoba, 1890-1898", in Donald Swainson (ed.), Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces (Toronto, 1970), 149; and Louis Aubrey Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada (First reprint; Toronto, 1975), 125.

¹⁹Grain Growers' Guide, IX:9 (March 21, 1916), 21.

²⁰PAM, Greenway Papers, #5115, R.H. Myers to Thomas Greenway, 16 March 1892. Myers wrote that "some of the Tories here [in Minnedosa riding], seeing it impossible to elect one [from] among themselves, have begun an agitation to bring out a 'farmer' (a Patron of Industry) and the cry is taking some of our people . . ."

²¹McCutcheon, op. cit., 164.

²²Wood, op. cit., 127.

²³CSP, Return of the Eighth General Election, 1897. The vote was William Roche (Conservative) 1533; J.H. Ashdown (Liberal) 1466; and GAJA Marshall (Patron) 472.

²⁴MT, 19 December 1901.

²⁵Ibid., 8 March 1894.

²⁶Ibid., 9 February 1899. Actually the first telephone was installed in 1889, but this was a private line connecting the cattle-buying firm of Taylor Bros. with a circuit owned by the Manitoba and Northwest Telegraph Company. It was used to obtain market quotations. (MM, op. cit., "Telephones", n.p.)

²⁷Ibid., 10 May 1900 and 17 May 1900.

²⁸MSP, "Copies of Correspondence between the Government and the Bell Telephone Company of Canada", 1908.

²⁹MT, 24 May 1900.

³⁰MWI, HF, Letter from D.R.P. Coates of the Manitoba Telephone System to Mrs. E. Brown, 19 October 1948.

³¹This calculation is based on population statistics for the rural municipalities of Odanah, Saskatchewan, Harrison, Blanchard, Clanwilliam, Strathclair, and Shoal Lake.

³²This phrase is Harold Innis's. See his The Bias of Communications (Toronto, 1973), and his Empire and Communications (Toronto, 1975).

³³W.L. Morton, Manitoba, A History (Toronto, 1967), 236.

³⁴MT, 28 April 1910.

³⁵See PAM, Transportation Collection: Automobile, "List of Automobile Owners, 1910".

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷See MSP, Municipal Commissioner's Annual Report. "Municipal Census, 1913". According to this census, the average number of horses per farm in Minnedosa's hinterland works out to over four.

³⁸A rare exception was the Odanah Coal Company of the 1880s. A handful of Minnedosans pooled their capital to develop a local coal seam, but the enterprise seems to have ended in failure.

³⁹MT, 12 November 1903.

⁴⁰Ibid., 13 February 1902.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²SM, 3 Edw. VII, C.6.

⁴³MT, 15 September 1904.

⁴⁴Ibid., 20 September 1906.

⁴⁵Morton, Manitoba, op. cit., 454.

- ⁴⁶MT, 22 December 1904.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., 1 August 1912.
- ⁴⁸D & B, Reference Books.
33. ⁴⁹PAM, Architectural and Historical Survey, 1964-1970, Vol. II,
- ⁵⁰Ibid.; the house still stands.
- ⁵¹MT, 19 December 1907.
- ⁵²PAM, Francis R. Hole, "Circular Letter undertaking settlement and supervision of Immigrant youth on Manitoba Farms", c1891.
- ⁵³Architectural and Historical Survey, op. cit., 33.
- ⁵⁴Ibid.
- ⁵⁵Ibid. and Henderson's, 1905.
- ⁵⁶Minnedosa Mercury, 31 May 1906.
- ⁵⁷The exact dates of formation are not known, but clearly the first was not organized before 1906 since it was only in January of that year that Patridge formed his company. The first newspaper account of a Grain Growers' meeting at Minnedosa is MT, 6 December 1909.
- ⁵⁸This assertion is based on a search of the Grain Growers' Guide, which revealed that almost all of the petitions for reform in the Minnedosa area came from these communities. The assertion is further corroborated by evidence found in the Archives of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon) which shows that locals of the radical Farmers' Union of Canada were formed at Bethany, Clanwilliam and Mountain Road in the 1920s. Clanwilliam and Mountain Road are villages in the same general area as Franklin and Bethany. (See AS, B2.VI.3, "Lodges of the Farmers' Union of Canada, list", no date.)
- ⁵⁹Wood, op. cit., 346.
- ⁶⁰Morton, Manitoba, op. cit., 324.

⁶¹This figure, and those which follow, are calculated from the poll results in CSP, 1912, Return of the Twelfth General Election.

⁶²Grain Growers' Guide, 8 November 1911, 8.

CHAPTER 6

¹MT, 1 August 1912 and ibid., 4 June 1914.

²MSP, Municipal Commissioner's Report, "Municipal Census", for 1910, 1912, and 1914.

³MT, 16 April 1914. The Monetary Times reported that thirteen creditors had applied for the loan.

⁴CSP, Postmaster-General's Annual Reports. In 1911 the value was \$59,747; by 1913 it had risen to \$103,551.

⁵Census of Canada, 1911, and Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1916.

⁶See Figure 5.

⁷D & B, Reference Books, 1911-1914. Burgess's experience was typical of most small businessmen in the period 1911-1919.

⁸See Chapter 3, p. 49.

⁹See D & B, Reference Books.

¹⁰MT, 26 May 1910.

¹¹In 1896 Minnedosa had three carriage-makers; by 1921 only one remained.

¹²MT, 26 June 1905.

¹³Refer to Figure 3.

¹⁴MT, 20 July 1911.

¹⁵SM, 7 Geo. V., C. 53.

¹⁶MT, 18 October 1917.

¹⁷Ibid., 30 June 1921.

¹⁸Ibid., 4 February 1909.

¹⁹MSP, Annual Report of the Department of Public Works, 1910.

²⁰MT, 19 October 1911.

²¹MM, op. cit., "Military Action", n.p.

²²Ed. J. Brown, op. cit., 4.

²³MT, 10 March 1910.

²⁴PAM, The Insurance Plan of Manitoba Towns, 1916, "Minnedosa".

²⁵MT, 26 August 1920.

²⁶Ibid., 30 April 1914.

²⁷Ibid., 10 June 1920.

²⁸This data, and that which follows in this paragraph, are taken from MSP, Municipal Commissioner's Reports, "Municipal Census", 1910, 1912, and 1914. They refer to the rural municipalities of Blanchard, Clanwilliam, Franklin, Harrison, Minto, Odanah, Saskatchewan, Shoal Lake, and Strathclair. These municipalities are all within Minnedosa's hinterland.

²⁹The distribution of population in the hinterland had shifted very little since 1907, and postal money order receipts make it plain that local hamlets and villages were still commercially active.

³⁰Grain Growers' Guide, 26 January 1910, p. 22.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., 12 March 1913, p. 14.

³³Ibid., 21 October 1914, p. 12.

³⁴For an editorial comments on this, see Minnedosa Mercury, 20 October 1907.

³⁵The Grain Growers had long requested a parcel post system like that in the United States. For an example of their attitude, see J.W. Ward, "Need for a Postal System," in the Grain Growers' Guide, 17 January 1912, p. 7. The system was introduced into Canada on 1 January 1914, and began at Minnedosa in early February.

³⁶MT, 19 April 1914

³⁷Grain Growers' Guide, 29 March 1916, p. 21.

³⁸See ibid., 18 August 1915, p. 13, for a list of locals in the Marquette District Grain Growers' Association. See ibid., 23 June 1915, p. 13, for locals in the Neepawa District Association, which took in part of Minnedosa's hinterland. The fact that "District" associations now existed says a great deal about the cohesiveness of the farm community.

³⁹Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1916.

⁴⁰V.C. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy (Toronto, 1973), 169.

⁴¹In Marquette the average farm size actually declined by .05% between 1916 and 1921, while the average cultivated acreage rose by 8%. See John H. Thompson "'Permanently Wasteful but Immediately Profitable'" Prairie Agriculture and the Great War, Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers, 1976, 193-206, for an account of the behavior of most Western farmers.

⁴²Census of Canada, 1911 and ibid., 1921.

⁴³Grain Growers' Guide, 20 December 1916, p. 12.

⁴⁴Morton, Progressive Party, op. cit., 27.

⁴⁵MT, 22 December 1892.

⁴⁶Minnedosa Mercury, 21 September 1905.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸J.H. Ellis, The Ministry of Agriculture in Manitoba (Winnipeg, 1971), 646.

⁴⁹MT, 20 October 1910

- ⁵⁰MM, op. cit., "Fraternal Organizations and Clubs", n.p.
- ⁵¹Grain Growers' Guide, 26 January 1910, p. 22.
- ⁵²Ibid., 17 December 1913, p. 6.
- ⁵³L.A. Wood, op. cit., 297.
- ⁵⁴Grain Growers' Guide, 26 January 1916, p. 27.
- ⁵⁵Manitoba, Department of Education, Annual Report for the Year 1900, "Report of Inspector T.M. Maguire, North Central Inspectoral Division."
- ⁵⁶See, for example, ibid., Annual Report for the Year 1907, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, North Western Inspectoral Division."
- ⁵⁷Ibid., Annual Report for the Year 1906, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, North Western Inspectoral Division."
- ⁵⁸Minnedosa Mercury, 19 March 1908.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., 20 February 1907.
- ⁶⁰Manitoba, Department of Education, Annual Report for the Year 1910, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, North Central Inspectoral Division."
- ⁶¹PAM, Public School Daily Registers for Recording the Attendance of Pupils, 1907-1922, for Minnedosa School District No. 232. See in particular the comments in the registers of 1909 and 1910. Note the contrast with earlier registers which indicate no moral instruction whatever.
- ⁶²MT, 11 May 1911.
- ⁶³See Carl Berger, The Sense of Power (Toronto, 1970), especially Chapter 10 "Militarism".
- ⁶⁴Manitoba, Department of Education, Annual Report for the Year 1908, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, North Central Inspectoral Division."

⁶⁵Ibid., Annual Report of 1911, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, Inspectoral Division No. 6".

⁶⁶On this question, see Robert Craig Brown's introduction to John MacDougall, Rural Life in Canada: Its Trends and Tasks (Toronto, 1973).

⁶⁷Manitoba, Department of Education, Annual Report for 1915, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, Inspectoral Division No. 6".

⁶⁸Ibid., Annual Report for 1916. "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, Inspectoral Division No. 6".

⁶⁹J.H. Ellis, op. cit., 221-23.

⁷⁰Manitoba, Department of Education, Annual Report for 1917, Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, Inspectoral Division No. 6".

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., Annual Report for 1920, "Report of Inspector A.B. Fallis, Inspectoral Division No. 6".

⁷⁴MT, 15 December 1921.

⁷⁵Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, 1880-1920: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus (Toronto, 1976), 88.

⁷⁶For a contemporary expression of this, see Francis Marion Beynon, Aleta Day, a novel (London, 1919). Beynon's thought is discussed in Ramsay Cook, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism", in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook (eds.), The West and the Nation (Toronto, 1976), 187-208.

⁷⁷MT, 10 September 1914.

⁷⁸MM, op. cit., "Military Action", n.p.

⁷⁹MT, 20 November 1917.

⁸⁰Ibid., 2 December 1917.

⁸¹Ibid., 27 November 1919.

⁸²See, for example, Grain Growers' Guide, 11 November 1914.

⁸³Ibid., 14 April 1915.

⁸⁴MT, 3 December 1914.

⁸⁵Ibid., 6 May 1915.

⁸⁶Ibid., 24 August 1916.

⁸⁷Ibid., 20 March 1919.

⁸⁸John Thompson, "The Prohibition Question in Manitoba, 1892-1927", M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1969., 72-74.

⁸⁹Ibid., 111.

⁹⁰PLM, Manitoba Election Returns since 1870 (microfilm).
It has not been possible to analyze the vote in terms of town/country polls.

⁹¹K.W. Gunn-Walberg, "The Church Union Movement in Manitoba, 1902-1925: A Cultural Study in the Decline of Denominationalism Within the Protestant Ascendancy", PH.D. Thesis, University of Guelph, 1971, 81.

⁹²Ibid., 112.

⁹³For a detailed discussion of Crerar's campaign in Marquette, see Foster J.K. Griezic, "The Honourable Thomas Alexander Crerar, Marquette Riding, and the Union Government Election of 1917", HSSM, Transactions, Series III, No. 28 (1971-72), 101-116.

⁹⁴CSP, Report of the Dominion Electoral Officer, "Return of the Thirteenth General Election". In Minnedosa the turnout was 74.4%; in the rest of Marquette it was 89.8%.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶It is not possible to ascertain whether individual farmers were voting for union government or for Crerar the Grain Grower. Griezic, op. cit., argues impressively in favor of the former view.

- ⁹⁷MT, 15 August 1918.
- ⁹⁸Ibid., 15 February 1919.
- ⁹⁹Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁰Ibid., 6 November 1919.
- ¹⁰¹Grain Growers' Guide, 30 July 1919, p. 10.
- ¹⁰²PLM, Manitoba Election Returns Since 1870 (microfilm).
- ¹⁰³This attitude first surfaced in the Minnedosa Mercury of 20 October 1907, and was still prevalent in 1920.
- ¹⁰⁴These merchants' arguments are extracted from an excellent letter to the Tribune of 22 January 1920.
- ¹⁰⁵Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁶Ibid., 15 January 1920.
- ¹⁰⁷Ibid., 10 November 1921.
- ¹⁰⁸See, for example, ibid., 27 October 1921.
- ¹⁰⁹See, for example, ibid., 24 November 1921.
- ¹¹⁰CSP, Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, "Return of the Fourteenth General Election"; all calculations in this paragraph are based on this source.
- ¹¹¹Crerar's newspaper advertisements all contained an apology for his absence from the riding during much of the campaign.
- ¹¹²Grain Growers' Guide, 3 May 1922.
- ¹¹³PLM, Manitoba Election Returns Since 1870 (microfilm).

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